BOSTON RECEIVES AAA BOND RATING
RAD ABOUT IT ON PAGE 7

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020

THE BOSTON SUN

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

SERVING BACK BAY - SOUTH END - FENWAY - KENMORE

Big Plans for Power Station: Jeff Gates takes helm on new luxury venue

Neighbors burnt in the past voice skepticism

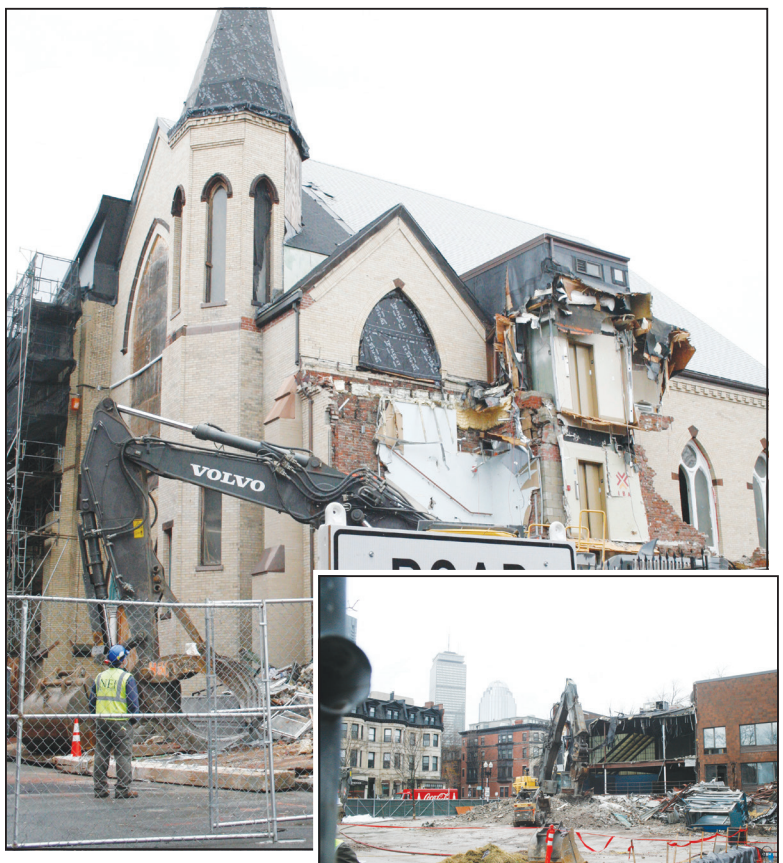
By Seth Daniel

Long-time South End restaurateur Jeff Gates pitched a new plan for the massive renovation of the Power Station at SoWa into a luxury event venue to a skeptical group of neighbors on Tuesday night – many of whom had been burned over the years with excessive noise from events at the open-air Power Station.

The decision to renovate and enclose the Power Station came some time ago, but hadn't been well-publicized to the commu-

(POWER STATION, *Pg. 5)*

HISTORY COMES DOWN



DEMOLITION DERBY... Two long-time South End buildings have begun to be demolished this week to make way for new buildings on the same site. First, West Newton Street closed down this week, and by Tuesday morning a good part of the old Villa Victoria Center for the Arts had been demolished. The Center, a former German church from the 1800s, was structurally unstable and condemned last year. IBA is hoping to build a new Center on the site within two year. Meanwhile, the former Tubman House on the corner of Mass and Columbus Avenues (inset) was nearly gone by Tuesday morning as crews continued its demolition. Human service organization USES sold the building to New Boston Ventures, which is developing it into housing and community space.

THANKSGIVING AT PINE STREET INN

COURTESY PHOTO

Mayor Martin Walsh made his annual Thanksgiving trip to the Pine Street Inn in the South End, shown here carving the turkey with Pine Street President Lyndia Downie. Mayor Walsh dropped by to carve the turkey and say hello to residents in the Pine who enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner. The mayor said he is thankful to all the partnerships in the City that are coming together to try to end homelessness in Boston.

LEARNING REMOTELY TOGETHER:

USES hosts students in Learning Pods

By Seth Daniel

Figuring out how to do schooling this year is next to impossible with most students under the heavy hand of an all-remote learning plan due to the COVID-19 school building closures, but getting out of the remote rut has come easy for some students through the United South End Settlements (USES) Learning Pods.

USES is one of a handful of innovative non-profit after-school providers who have shifted their expertise to figuring out how to get kids together for remote schooling – helping them to navigate the world of remote school, supporting their parents/families and also providing enrichment in slow times.

To date, it's been a hit and USES is preparing to add one new pod next week to accommodate more students in the unique and safe setup.

Jose Masso, vice president of programs and operations, said

(LEARNING PODS , *Pg. 7)*

SELDC approves 541 Mass. Ave. addition for height, landscaping, setback, and massing

By Lauren Bennett

The South End Landmark District Commission (SELDC) met virtually on December 1, where Commissioners heard a proposal for the Woods Mullen Shelter and Services at 794 Mass Ave. to demolish a section of the five story building and erect a three-story addition as well as create a new entrance vestibule.

The building is located in a protection area, so Commissioners had to come to an agreement about whether enough

(SELDC, *Pg. 3)*

EDITORIAL

'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING -- AND NEVER HAS THE NEED BEEN MORE URGENT

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." -- Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities.

With Christmas fast approaching, most of us will be rushing about -- either to the stores and malls or on-line --- to do our holiday shopping in hopes of finding that "perfect" gift for our family members and loved ones.

Despite the pandemic that has ravaged our nation in so many ways, most Americans actually are doing okay, if not extremely well. Sure, the pandemic has made life inconvenient and not as enjoyable as usual for everybody, but most of us are getting along just fine.

Those who are able to work from home have not suffered a loss of income. And for those among us who have any sort of investments, from real estate to the stock market to certain types of small businesses, the pandemic has been a boon.

However, the good economic news for the majority of Americans has not been shared by all. For a sizable minority of our fellow citizens, the effects of the pandemic represent an existential disaster.

Millions of Americans of all ages, in a percentage greater than at any time since the Great Depression, are struggling financially.

To put it in stark terms, more Americans, including families in our own communities, are going hungry than at any time in our history. The lines of cars that stretch for miles and miles in cities all across the country are the equivalent of the iconic photos of the bread lines and soup kitchens of the 1930s..

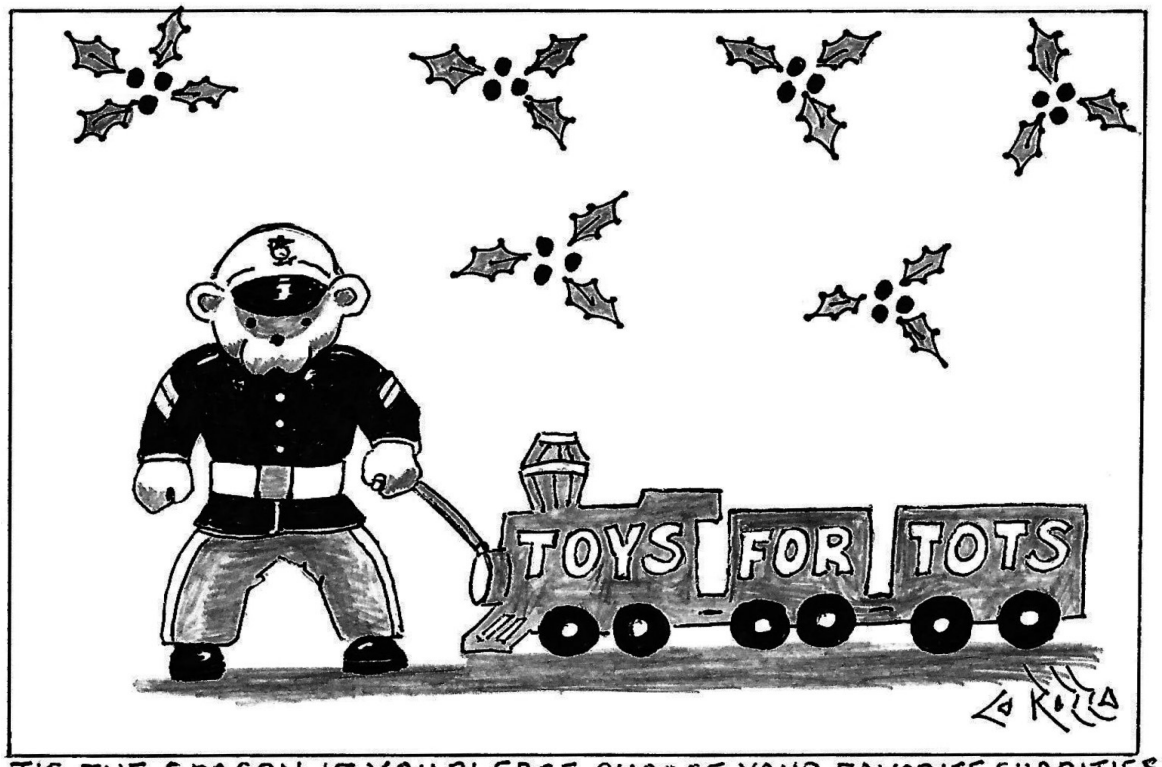
Far too many of our fellow citizens, including children, live either in shelters or in similar temporary housing arrangements -- or on the streets -- because the reality of our economy has left them out in the cold -- literally -- thanks to the pandemic.

The homeless always have been among us, but the scope and depth of the problem is far beyond anything that has been experienced in our lifetime. The vast discrepancy between the enormous wealth enjoyed by some Americans and the abject poverty being endured by others is similar to what has existed in major urban centers in South America and India -- but it now is happening right here in the U.S.A.

For these millions of Americans, the holiday season brings no joy.

Psychologists tell us that the Biblical directive, that we should give to those who are less fortunate, actually is the best gift that we can give to ourselves. Helping others activates regions of the brain associated with pleasure, social connection, and trust, creating the so-called "warm glow" effect.

Never in the lifetime of anybody reading this editorial has the need for donations to local food banks been more urgent. There will be ample opportunity to do so in the coming weeks to make the holidays brighter for those who are less fortunate -- and there is no excuse for failing to do so.



'TIS THE SEASON, IF YOU PLEASE, CHOOSE YOUR FAVORITE CHARITIES

GUEST OP-ED

Together, we must stop MBTA service cuts

By Senator Sal DiDomenico

The MBTA Fiscal Management and Control Board recently released their "Forging Ahead Initiative," a series of ill-conceived cuts to MBTA services that will have devastating (and likely long-lasting) impacts on those who rely on public transit to get to and from work. Our district in particular will be uniquely impacted by these cuts, as we are one of the most transit-dependent in the state. Not to mention, we have been some of the hardest hit by COVID, while also having one of the highest percentages of essential workers.

According to the MBTA's Forging Ahead website, some of the main "proposals" impacting our community include:

•Subway: 20% Frequency Reductions Across All Lines; Service Stops after Midnight.

•Bus: 5% Frequency Reduction on Essential Routes & 20% Reduction on Non-Essential Routes; Service Stops after Midnight.

•Commuter Rail: Service Stops after 9 PM; Weekend Service Ends (as early as Jan. 2021); Decreased Peak and Midday Service.

•Ferry: All Ferry Service Will End; Charlestown Ferry Diverted to the Rt.93 Bus.

•The Ride: Some trips may become premium and be able to be booked 40 minutes in advance, instead of the current 30 minutes.

Without question, components of the MBTA's plan, such as stopping bus service at midnight, will disproportionately impact essential employees who don't work regular hours and need to travel late at night. It especially hurts my Chelsea and Everett constituents who already don't even have access to subway or commuter rail, and solely rely on the bus to connect them with their jobs and their community. Every part of my district will be impacted by these cuts, and we should all be concerned that these "temporary" changes could become permanent, impacting our transportation system for years or even decades to come.

Our region cannot recover from this pandemic and get moving again until, and unless, we redouble our efforts to build a transportation system that facilitates the movement of people, not just cars. Reducing public transit will severely limit access to these services for communities and residents that need it most, further exacerbating inequities that the pandemic has already brought to light. If we want to heal from this, we must invest more in our transit system, not take services away. We all recognize these are difficult fiscal times, particularly for the underfunded MBTA, but these unprecedented times underscore the need for further investment in our economic drivers, not less.

As for next steps and what

(OP-ED *Pg.* 3)

THE BOSTON SUN:

PRESIDENT/EDITOR: STEPHEN QUIGLEY STEPHEN.QUIGLEY@THEBOSTONSUN.COM
MARKETING DIRECTOR: DEBRA DIGREGORIO (DEB@THEBOSTONSUN.COM)
ART DIRECTORS: KANE DIMASSO-SCOTT, SCOTT YATES
REPORTERS: SETH DANIEL, SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM LAUREN BENNETT, LAUREN@THEBOSTONSUN.COM

SELDC *(from pg. 1)*

demolition was proposed to justify reviewing the project "to district standards," according to Chair John Amodeo. According to the South End Landmarks Standards and Criteria, "…the only items subject to design review in the Protection Area are: demolition, land coverage, height of structures, landscape, and topography."

Architect J. Michael Sullivan said that the purpose of this project is to improve the facilities for the women's shelter, including creating a larger bathroom facility and a new entrance to the building. He said that the entrance is currently through the loading dock, but the new entrance is proposed to be on the southwest side of the building.

The proposed three story addition will be on the south elevation, he added.

"In addition, there is a desire to have an elevator to serve all five floors," Sullivan said, which would be located at the southwest entry. He also said the project includes repairing the existing windows as well.

Sullivan said the entrance vestibule would have alucobond material on the facade, which would look like metal panels "to distinguish it a little" from the rest of the masonry building.

The addition will include red masonry that "evolves into the blond masonry" with random mixes of the two brick colors where they meet in the middle.

He said that a contractor has been selected and demolition is happening right now.

The Commission spent a good chunk of time discussing whether or not they think there is enough demolition to hold this building to district standards in their review.

Commissioner John Freeman said that he doesn't think there is enough demolition, but Commissioners generally agreed that the building is highly visible to both pedestrians and vehicle traffic.

"I'd just say it's a shame," Commissioner Catherine Hunt said of the design. "It's not doing the original building any service I don't think."

Commissioner David Shepperd said that it "seems like it's a pretty highly visible corner of the building" where the addition will be, adding that it "takes away from some of the symmetry of the facade that people enter through."

Hunt said she "urges" the project team to "strive for something that is more compatible with this art deco design that is so significant. I'm afraid because we don't have any jurisdiction that that may go unheeded."

Amodeo said he thinks the "fenestration is distracting," and he does think the building contributes significantly to the neighborhood.

Peter Sanborn, a former SELDC Commissioner and current South End resident, said he lives two blocks from this building. "I find this design frankly kind of appalling and I think as presented here reinforces the worst of institutional architecture," he said.

"I understand the limited jurisdiction that the Commission has. I don't see how the addition relates to the existing building in the least."

He said that while the existing building is "not a gem," it is "a piece of its period," and he suggested the rearrangement of the brick pattern proposed for the addition. He said that "rather than placing the lighter brick at the corner, place it to the left side of the addition," and at the Melnea Cass side, "place it at the right edge so that it would lighten out as it gets closer to the existing windows on the existing building."

After some further discussion, the Commission voted to approve this proposal as submitted only for what they have purview over: height, landscaping, and setback, and it will be approved for massing "with the request that the applicant review the comments that were made during this session and consider massings which could possibly improve it," Freeman said. Though it could not be an official proviso, the Commission also requested that the project team "review other comments made about fenestration and proportions of the walls," he added.

Sullivan said he appreciates the comments made by the Commission and thanked them for their feedback.

Guest Op-Ed *(from pg. 2)*

we can do about this, please know I am already in talks with my Senate colleagues and leadership in the Legislature regarding action we can take in response to these cuts. I have also addressed my concerns and opposition to the "Forging Ahead Initiative" directly with the MBTA's leadership team. Additionally, the MBTA has hosted several regional meetings regarding these proposals, where I have testified against these cuts.

While the public meetings for our district have already passed, you can still submit your feedback to the MBTA by emailing them at publicengagement@mbta.com. I encourage everyone to do so; stopping these cuts will be a collective effort, one that requires advocacy from legislators like myself, but also grassroots opposition. The deadline for feedback is coming up soon on December 4th, so please do not delay in contacting the MBTA if you wish to register your concerns.

I have already heard from so many of my constituents on this, and many have indicated they will be contacting the MBTA as well. I am truly grateful for everyone's advocacy on this issue. It is my sincere hope that, working together, we can stop these cuts from taking place and protect public transportation for generations to come.

Sal N. DiDomenico is an Massachusetts State Senator legislator who has served in the Massachusetts Senate since May 2010 and as Assistant Majority Leader since 2018. He is a Democrat representing the Middlesex and Suffolk district, which includes his hometown of Everett as well as Chelsea, Allston , Brighton, Charlestown , and parts of Cambridge and Boston.

WSANA hosts Mayoral candidate and Councilor Andrea Campbell

By Seth Daniel

The Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association (WSANA) hosted mayoral candidate and District 4 Councilor Andrea Campbell at their meeting last week, Nov. 24, for a lengthy question and answer session.

The neighborhood has historically had support for Mayor Martin Walsh, but the meeting has also historically been open to any candidate as well. That said, several in WSANA have become frustrated with the Mass/Cass 2.0 plan and its execution over the last several month – and are more than open to shopping around and seeing what the candidates have to say.

That was the case when Campbell, who has focused mostly in her career on her Dorchester and Mattapan district, appeared in the online meeting to present her case for mayor and take questions in what was about a 45-minute session with a healthy group of neighbors.

Campbell introduced herself by saying she grew up right on the boundaries of WSANA, living in Grant Manor on Washington Street for a time with her grandmother when a girl.

Her focus, she said, has been on increasing equity in the City for marginalized populations, and also making Boston Public School more accountable and better for all students.

That said, one of the main issues on the minds of WSANA residents would be her approach to the opioid situation at Mass/Cass. She scored points in September by being invited to and showing up for a walk-through with neighbors – something she said was a hard thing to witness.

In that letter, she said that even though there are long-term plans in place for the problem, short term solutions need to be implemented. In that letter, and in the conversation on Nov. 24, she elaborated on three suggestions – that being to address immediate sanitation and shelter space; decentralizing services from the Mass/Cass Corridor; and convening leaders from all over Greater Boston to call them to do more for their communities.

"Decentralizing is not only about equity, it is also necessary for effective recovery as individuals commented on (the walk-through) how hard it is to get sober when a safe injection site is right next to recovery services," she wrote.

One of the questions last Tuesday was about what she would do to reach out to the state and region to push them to provide more services. She said there hasn't been a lot of push that she's seen, and she put forward the idea of working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) – the regional planning agency for Greater Boston- to see what the overall plan is, if there is one.

"I firmly believe we need to push the state and Gov. Baker in this," she said. "The hands-off approach they've taken isn't working…Let's talk to MAPC and find out what their plan is for these neighboring communities. If they don't have a plan, that's a problem because we in Boston have to step up and serve their residents because we know many of those down there aren't from Boston. We have to call out the state and Gov. Baker to do better."

She also stressed once again that she would let the Task Force and the 2.0 Plan work – along with the long-term solutions of the Recovery Campus on Long Island. However, she stressed that what is missing is the short-term plans to address quality of life issues that happen now. She reiterated many times she would "pull every lever" she could to get action locally and at the state level – and noted her experience as an attorney in the Deval Patrick Administration.

Candidate for Mayor and Councilor Andrea Campbell.

Another question put to her was her opinion on sanctioned Safe Injection Sites (SIFs) being operated in Boston – perhaps in the South End. Campbell said she hasn't done all the homework on that issue, but knows they are not wanted in her district.

"I'm studying it and keeping an open mind, but certainly in my district people are overwhelmingly opposed," she said. "If you want to do that as a solution you need to take it on the road and say why it is a good solution at this moment in time…I will say that is not (a solution) that's been on the top of the list. Frankly, what I hear is how do people get access to services that are existing now and not to locate those services in one area of the city."

•STRESSES OF BUSINESS

Andre's Café owner Haido Barnett appeared before WSANA and expressed frustrations with the business climate and lack of support from the City in the face of the opioid crisis where she operates on Harrison Avenue.

She said she has a lease for a few more years, but the way things have been going, she said she's tired and wants to sell her shop.

"I put my business up for sale well before the pandemic," she said. "That was tough for me. I have a daughter and it's not in the cards…We have to clean feces off the side of our wall every single day. My employees do that every day and it's tiring – very tiring. It's disheartening to go through that and not get the support of the City…This is not what I signed up for as a business owner. It's no one's fault, but I don't want to wake up to it every day."

WSANA residents decided to form a committee immediately to begin talking with Barnett and other business owners – some of whom don't share her sentiments – about supporting them more in their travails.

Member Bob Minnocci is leading that up, along with help from Peter Sanborn.

•CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Christmas has put WSANA at a crossroads, said President George Stergios. It has become quite clear that having a big celebration as they normally do is not going to be possible this year. However, WSANA is the longest-standing tree lighting ceremony in the city, and there is already a tree in place.

Members decided they would light the tree in a short ceremony on Dec. 6 in the afternoon while gathered outside in a social distant way around the Square. In doing so, Stergios said they could keep the tradition going and not compromise anyone's health.

"I think we should do something this year," he said. "We're forgoing enough this year. We're just sort of raising the flag here and then we'll do something big next year."

•There is no monthly meeting of WSANA in December due to the Christmas and New Year's holiday, but the meeting in late January could feature Councilor and mayoral candidate Michelle Wu for another Q&A.

bpda | PLAN: Nubian Square

Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee

Monday, December 7
6:00 PM - 7:45PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3jZ22xs
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 161 689 4331

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:
December/ Deciembre/ Desanm 7
January/ Enero/ Janvye 4
February/ Febrero/ Fevriye 1

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
617.918.4593 | kelly.sherman@boston.gov

Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary
bostonplans.org | @bostonplans

Power Station *(from pg. 1)*

nity until now when Gates took the helm with Events Planner Rachel Silverman – particularly because they are looking to get approval for a liquor license that will be attached to the new Power Station venue.

Gates said former operator Brad St. Amand has left GTI, which is owner Mario Nicosia's company, and he has now stepped in to lead the transformative effort on the Power Station – which has been a more informal, open air, one-day license situation for many years. The decision now was to either upgrade the unique building and get its own licenses, or demolish it and develop the space. The decision has been to transform the property, which has been ongoing for months.

"To fix the problem of lack of control over events was going to cost $500,000 for a license," said Gates, who spent more than an hour answering questions from hesitant neighbors. "What's happened in the past few months is a neighborhood license came available and we were able to get a license possibly to get out of this problem. I want to have my own license in there and my own staff…By having my own license, I can run a program there and have full control of it."

An abutters meeting on the matter has been scheduled for Dec. 10, and there is a License Board hearing for the liquor license on Dec. 26, Gates said.

The renovations are ongoing and have been extensive, Gates said. They have enclosed the entire building, they are installing new windows and doors, put on a new roof and reinforced the steel girders. They have also added a second floor space, a large vestibule at the entrance and a third floor office space that will become GTI's headquarters – with their Harrison Avenue headquarters now becoming a retail space. There has also been and HVAC, air conditioning and heating system installed. There will also be bathrooms inside, eliminating the need to have Port-o-Potties outside.

The occupancy has been drastically reduced, though, due to the renovations, going from 3,000 in the old building to 1,634 standing and 1,056 seated.

"We're going to end up with a closed building, completely closed in," Gates said.

"Occupancy has gone down considerably, but it's a trade-off we made to have everything enclosed and have a much more organized structure. It was good back when it started… but the neighborhood changed a lot. That building didn't and it needed to. It's gotten the love it needed."

And for all his enthusiasm and impeccable neighborhood reputation, some abutters and neighbors were a bit agitated that the news was just now coming to them.

"I and my neighbors are concerned," said John Connelly during the Tuesday East Berkeley Neighborhood Association (EBNA) meeting online. "We want to make sure we won't hear every musical beat and every speech made. There are also a ton of concerned neighbors on this because there hasn't been a lot of information shared."

Judith Klau lives across the street, and like many neighbors that spoke, she has been traumatized by the noise that has come from the Power Station events over the past several years.

"I couldn't think it was so loud," she said. "That is a tremendous amount of noise."

Mark Levine lives right in front of the Power Station on Harrison Avenue, and said he wanted to support the measure, but couldn't do so if there was going to be a lot of noise and especially outdoor events.

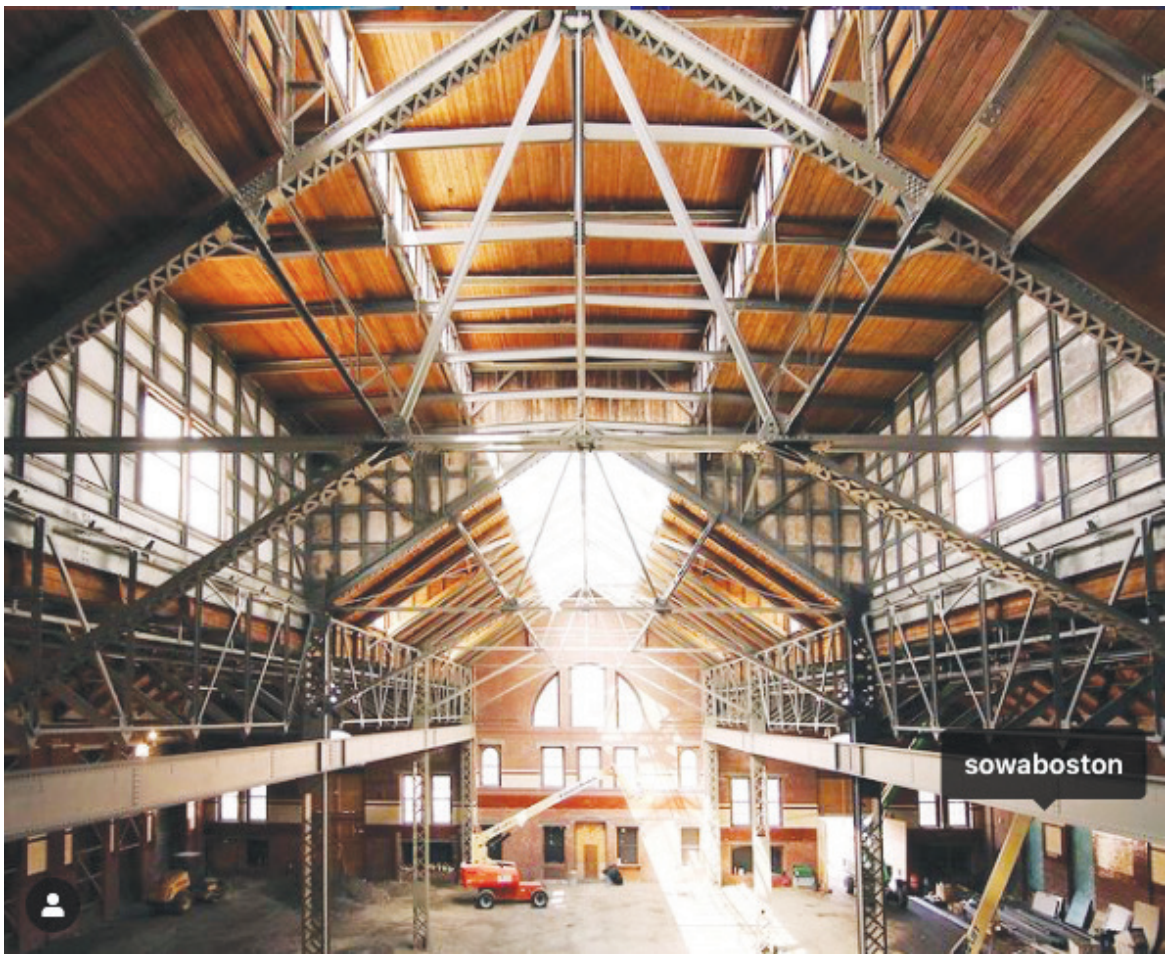
"I can tell you when things are hopping at SoWa, we can't think there is so much noise," he said. "You want to run away…I would like to know how much will be going on outside…That is a problem – the sound – that has to be addressed to get our support."

Gates said they have spent the money on windows and doors, and by nature the closing of the building would make it much more quiet than the open structure that was there. He said he has three events booked for May already, and has been taking events planners through the space. He indicated the clientele will be much different than before, as it will be a much more expensive venue to rent. Gates indicated he pictured corporate events there, and maybe a few weddings for those that can afford it.

"When you have open doors and windows it's easy to lose control of the sound and blow out the neighbors," he said. "With doors and windows you don't have that anymore…It's not a nightclub. You're not going to have to worry about any events in there if the space is so loud you can hear it. That means it will be too loud inside for anyone and no events will be booked…I've been here a long time, but I'm with you. I enjoyed events there in the past, but some of those are events we wouldn't do again. We're looking to operate something that classic. We want to do something that everyone is great and proud of and not something that will have us at each other's throats the next 10 years."

In the end, it came down to the assurance of Gates, and he seemed to stake his long-time reputation on the venture and it's neighborly operation.

EBNA President Ken Smith said the Board of the neighborhood association would discuss the matter at their upcoming meeting with input from neighbors and decide whether or not to support the liquor license, which goes for a hearing on Dec. 26 at City Hall.



The Power Station at SoWa has been transformed over the last several months into an enclosed events space with occupancy for 1,634 people and a new operator, long-time restaurateur Jeff Gates. Gates asked the neighbors for support of the venue and for supporting a liquor license there, saying he wanted to do something "classic." Neighbors were skeptical due to past transgressions for noise and traffic and parking at SoWa.

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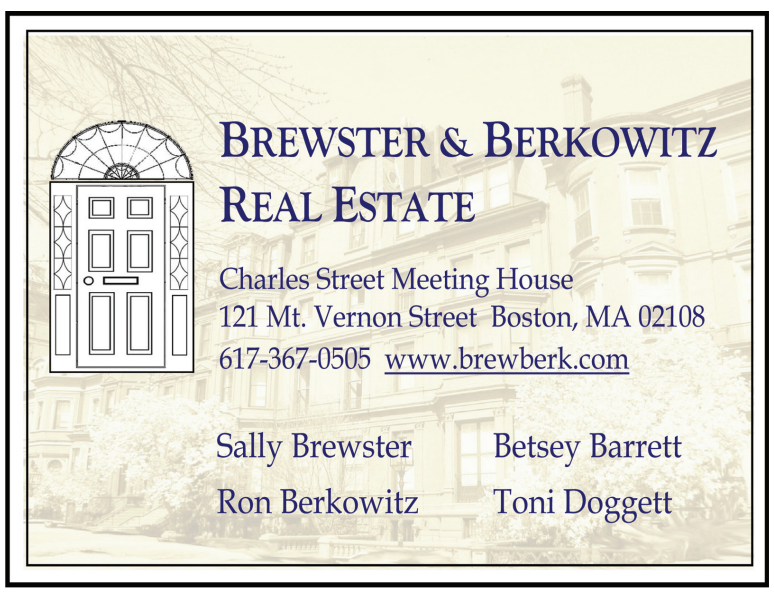
AT A SEASONAL CROSSROADS

Fall and Christmas blended together in the South End this week on West Springfield Street with the fall colors on an elm and the red of a Christmas bow in the background.



Back Bay area see drop in COVID cases

By John Lynds

After experiencing a 25 percent increase two weeks ago, the positive test rate in Back Bay and surrounding neighborhoods decreased by nearly 60 percent last week according to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) on Friday.

Last week the BPHC reported that 32,056 Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End and Downtown residents were tested for COVID-19 and the data shows that 2.8 percent of those tested were COVID positive. This was a 59 percent decrease from the 6.9 percent testing positive as reported two weeks ago. The citywide positive test rate average was 5 percent--a 50 percent percent increase from the 10.2 percent that tested positive two weeks ago.

Overall since the pandemic began 3.4 percent of Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End and Downtown residents was found to be COVID positive.

At his daily press briefing Tuesday, Mayor Martin Walsh said that in the two weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, Boston's numbers went in the right direction.

"But, we expect to see an increase when the impact of Thanksgiving activity makes it into the testing data," said Walsh.

He said the City will be monitoring that data closely as it comes in.

"In the meantime, we all have to do everything we can to prevent the virus from spreading, by taking our collective and individual precautions as seriously as ever," said Walsh.

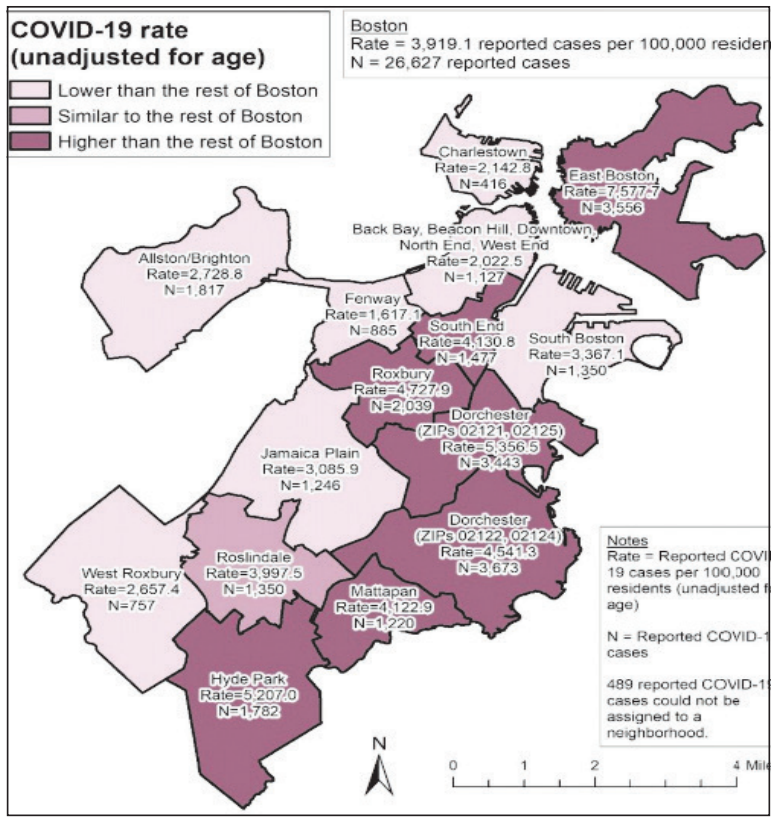
The infection rate in Back Bay and surrounding neighborhoods increased 10.6 percent in one week according to the latest city statistics.

The BPHC data released last Friday showed Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End and Downtown had an infection rate of 202.2 cases per 10,000 residents, up from 182.8 cases per 10,000 residents.

One Hundred eight additional residents became infected with the virus last week and the total number of cases in the area increased from 1,019 cases to 1,127 cases as of last Friday.

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 increased10 percent last week and went from 25,105 cases to 27,635 confirmed cases. Twenty more Boston residents died from the virus and there are now 919 total deaths in the city from COVID.



On Friday the BPHC released its weekly COVID-19 stats by neighborhood that tracks infection rates and COVID testing results in Boston neighborhoods.

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understand your healthcare options.

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B | *Mayor Martin J. Walsh* **#BOSCanHelp** **BOS:311**

Walsh discusses COVID-19, announces that City received AAA bond rating for seventh consecutive year

By Lauren Bennett

Mayor Marty Walsh held a press conference on Tuesday to discuss updates on coronavirus as well as talk about resources that are available to residents.

Walsh said that as of Tuesday, Boston had 407 new cases of COVID-19. No new deaths were reported on Tuesday, but he said that since Friday, 11 Bostonians had died from the virus,

He said that every neighborhood saw a decrease in positivity over the past two weeks, but following the Thanksgiving holiday, he said there might be some increases. He said that getting tested is important to be able to catch cases early to prevent further spread within the community.

"We're going to be monitoring the data closely," Walsh said. He said continuing to wash hands, wear a mask, and stay distant form others is imperative. He warned residents to be careful at work, and to self-quarantine for 14 days if they think they have been exposed to the virus.

He also mentioned that the extension on outdoor dining for public property will soon end in Boston, but exceptions can be made for extending it on private property. He said the City has to prepare for the winter and the sidewalks have to be clear.

Walsh then talked about free food resources throughout the city. He mentioned reports of food pantries "struggling" across the country to be able to provide for the growing number of people who are in need of food, but assured residents that the system is "resilient" in Boston. "They have not stopped at all," he said, and the City continues to provide support to these organizations through the Boston Resiliency Fund.

He said that there are currently 58 active youth meal sites throughout the City where no ID is required and "children do not need to be present," he said, adding that there are 26 "Boston Public Schools super sites" where parents and guardians can pick up three meals at once for children, and Walsh said that the City hopes to provide groceries along with the packaged meals at these sites.

He also said that more money will be added "in the coming month" to the the EBT card for BPS parents that was distributed earlier this year.

Walsh also announced that the City of Boston has received a AAA bond rating for the seventh consecutive year in a row from Moody's Investor Service and S&P Global Ratings. He said that because of this rating, the city's "credit is trusted as the best in its class," which will allow the city to "invest in more of our neighborhoods than ever before," he said.

Boston has also been named as the "city best prepared to withstand the COVID-19 recession" by the National Tax Journal and the New York Times, Walsh announced. "That's an outstanding achievement," he said, and thanked all who played a role.

The City can invest more money into affordable housing, new schools and libraries, open space, climate resiliency projects, bus and bike lanes, and other "infrastructure that supports the quality of life in the City of Boston," Walsh said. He also said that for the first time ever, there will be a series of green bonds for investments in energy efficiency "and climate adaptation in our public spaces," as well as social bonds for things like affordable housing.

For more information, visit Boston's Investor Relations site at buybostonbonds.com. According to the City, "the website is a part of the City's continued efforts to optimize financial disclosure and is designed to drive investment in Boston's bonds, which help pay for capital projects and investments the City makes."

Learning Pods *(from pg. 1)*

USES closed its doors in March as the surge hit the city, but was able to open back up some of its programming in July for the summer. Through that, they were able to learn how to keep kids and staff safe and healthy while also getting some normalcy into the lives of their families. Soon enough, they wondered if that experience could translate to remote schooling.

"We were able to do the summer successfully and safely," he said. "That gave us a sense of what we could do with the school year. We talked about how to do this and decided early on to support families that opted for fully remote learning…Not every single family was able to work from home and it was hard for them to be able to monitor students when they had to work. Those that were working from home, it was also hard for them to do their jobs and monitor their child's schooling. We wanted to support these families and we decided to do it."

When school started on Sept. 21, they had three pods with children ages 5-13 and they added a fourth pod shortly after. Now, Masso said they are preparing to add a fifth pod to the program in a week or so.

There are currently around 42 kids in the pods, and two adult staff members monitor and support the students in their remote learning every day.

The effort in large part came due to the work of Kaiti Coffin, director of ECE & OST, Mason Williams, Assistant Director of club48 Afterschool Program, and Julia Heinzmann, Arts & STEAM Manager. For those who think opening up a pod would be easy work, Masso said the above staff had their work cut out for them. That's because the 42 kids don't go to the same schools, have the same schedules or the same teachers. Everything is different every day, and coordinating it all was a heavy lift.

"Not every students goes to the same school, may not be in the same grade, or may not have the same teacher," he said. "You'll have two students with physical education and they need to stand up and then the other students sitting down quietly and in their online classrooms. Coordination can be very hard."

Each day, students report as early as 8:30 a.m., and bring their laptops with them. After a health screening and safety check, they are off to their pods, and students and staff in different pods don't mix so there are not tracing issues.

So far, the system has worked and there's been no major concerns.

"There's been cases within our community and we responded to them appropriately," he said. "Thankfully, nothing has affected our program or our ability to open our program. With luck and diligence we'll be able to continue to support the families this way."

Inside each pod, students are separated with distance and Plexiglas dividers, and the outdoor space at the Rutland Street facility has proven remarkable to help students get exercise and social time with peers – something that is totally missing from many students stuck full-time at home.

USES has made a decision that they will give staff – who have been more than willing to step up this fall for the students – the Christmas break off with pay through January to prevent burnout.

"We are very happy we were able to support families with the Learning Pods," said Masso. "It's about being flexible and that's certainly something this pandemic has taught us how to be."

A student working on homework last month in the USES Learning Pod at the Rutland Street facility in the South End. USES stepped up starting in September to provide learning centers for students in fully remote schooling. The program has been a hit, and has been operated safely too. It allows students to avoid loneliness, to get time with peers, to get directions from staff members and also to allow parents who are essential workers to head to the office confidently.

School Committee apologizes for inaction on anti-Asian remarks, but calls for more tolerance

By Seth Daniel

The Boston School Committee took the first hour of its meeting on Nov. 18 to apologize for remarks made by its former Chair Michael Loconto that were termed offensive to Asians, but that time of reflection also had a strong message to the community to show more tolerance and not to judge Loconto solely on that one remark.

"My discomfort with your resignation is growing," said Member Hardin Coleman, who read from a letter he sent Loconto after the incident. "I remain discomforted by the resignation of the Boston community to lead with anger and distrust instead of fairness and reasoning…What leads me to discomfort with our community is that demanding your expulsion from your civic role is in direct contradiction to our principle of restorative justice – a concept that is supported by many of those that called for your expulsion."

The remarks by Loconto came during a marathon meeting on Oct. 21 that lasted into the wee hours of Oct. 22 and featured a highly-charged debate and vote on changing the admissions criteria for the City's three exam schools. At around 11:30 p.m. in that online meeting, Loconto was heard mocking the names – apparently – of some Asian parents who wanted to speak against changing the criteria. It was immediately called out, and seemed like he hadn't realized his microphone was on. He resigned the next day and apologized for his comments. However, the matter was exacerbated by a report in the Boston Globe showing that members privately texted one another about the comments during the meeting, including telling Loconto how he might be able to explain them away.

But the session at the School Committee meeting on Nov. 18 wasn't just about bashing the former chair's comments – which most everyone agrees were not characteristic of his typical conduct. In fact, he seemed to have several allies on the Board who were disappointed that the overall community didn't give him a second chance before calling for his resignation.

One of the strongest voices in that call was from the Committee's only Asian American member – that being Member Quoc Tran.

Tran's comments were quite powerful, and he said he was speaking from the heart and had prayed and meditated on the matter prior to the meeting so he could choose the right words. Many would have expected him – a long-time Civil Rights activist in the Vietnamese community – to condemn and dispatch Loconto to the history books. In fact, though, his words suggested the exact opposite and he said he was "personally resentful" that Loconto was pushed to resign.

Tran said he has been an activist for 30 years and, while he condemns Loconto's comments on that night, he doesn't think it should define all of the work he had done for all the BPS communities – including the Asian community.

"Throughout more than 30 years of working in Civil Rights, I've learned a few things," he said. "I used to be a very ardent fighter against anything discriminatory, but now I'm over 60 and looking at everything I've fought for and there's one thing we haven't been practicing as we should and that's tolerance and tolerance has been missing since this incident."

He said that lacking the tolerance to forgive Loconto of his words on that night, and allowing him to move forward on the Committee, will only perpetuate racism and not ease it. He called on the Asian community to teach the City how to be tolerant in the face of terribly hurtful comments.

The Boston School Committee apologized at its Nov. 18 meeting for its former chairman's comment that were derogatory to Asian community members, but also many Committee members asked for people not to define the former chairman by that one moment.

"To my Asian community, the one thing we grow up with – the first thing instilled in us from the cultures in China, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia is tolerance and patience," he said. "Let's practice that and teacher American people what tolerance is."

New Chair Alexandra Oliver-Davila said the comments were unacceptable, and she also apologized for her inaction in not condemning them on the spot. She said his words were not okay, but that moment should not define him.

"Words matter and names matter and I appreciate that Mr. Loconto was quick to apologize and resign," she said. "He recognized his words were hurtful to our Asian community members. However, his lapse of judgement in that moment cannot and should not erase all his years of supporting equitable education access for all Boston students and shouldn't define his tenure with that challenging moment."

Supt. Brenda Cassellius also apologized for the actions, and praised the work of Councilor Ed Flynn for bringing the BPS leaders and the Asian community in his district together to create more of an understanding. She said they plan to have a workshop on Dec. 9 to train with Dr. Ibram Kindi of the Boston University Center for Antiracist Research. The Committee will also hold a day-long retreat on Dec. 12 to discuss the matter more, and to also talk about logistics for returning students to in-person learning.

Outdoor seating on private property extended, Public Space program ends

By John Lynds

Mayor Martin Walsh reminded owners that outdoor dining on private property was extended indefinitely without the need for further permits.

However, the city's "Public Space" program expired Tuesday. Restaurant owners in the Back Bay trying to increase business by providing an outdoor dining option will now have to start packing up their outdoor tables, chairs, heating lamps and barriers and rely solely on limited indoor dining throughout the winter months if they don't have private space for outdoor dining.

The Public Space program allowed restaurants throughout the Back Bay to use city sidewalks, streets, parking lots and to set up tables, chairs and other amenities for outdoor dining.

"For restaurants, we have plans to continue our outdoor dining option," said Walsh last week during a press conference. "The public space ended on December 1. But, outdoor dining may continue on private property indefinitely. In addition, we are working on an outdoor dining program for the spring."

The Back Bay and Boston's restaurant industry has been hit particularly hard by the ongoing pandemic. Tough regulations for indoor dining and other restrictions imposed by the state during the latest COVID spike made the Public Space program a godsend for some.

To offer some relief the Walsh Administration launched the Public Space program last spring and allowed Back Bay restaurants to use sidewalk space and the street on main thoroughfares like Newbury and Boylston Streets to set up outdoor patios. The program was designed to help restaurants that dot the neighborhood increase their customer base because the number of patrons allowed inside were strictly limited due to COVID restrictions.

However, even with a rapid expansion of outdoor dining options in the Back Bay, some restaurants still fell victim to the pandemic and could not increase margins enough to justify staying open.

Over the summer Whiskey's and McGreevy's closed their doors. Then this past fall the popular bars Pour House and Lir shut down.

While it remains to be seen if the Pour House will reopen under new owners, Lir, the 17-year-old Irish Pub on Boylston Street, announced its closure in September and wrote in a statement, "We have all witnessed some amazing things together. Title winning championships, marathons, parades. The list could go on forever. Our mission has always been to make Lir your home away from home, whether you're Irish, American, or a little bit of both. It pains us to leave you, but we can assure you that these memories will live on."

On September 15, the Boston Licensing Board issued an advisory regarding the extension of the City's Temporary Outdoor Dining Program and the use of approved heaters.

The board ruled restaurants utilizing public sidewalks and parking lanes for outdoor dining may continue the approved use of those spaces until December 1, 2020.

However, the board said outdoor dining on private property will be extended for the duration of the COVID-19 related public health emergency.

BLC approves Comm. Ave. Mall bench; landscaping plan for Arlington St. Church

By Lauren Bennett

The Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) met virtually on November 24, where Commissioners approved a new bench for the Commonwealth Avenue Mall as well as a landscape plan for the Boylston Street elevation of the Arlington Street Church. The Commission also heard an advisory review of the Boston Common Master Plan.

COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Liz Vizza, Executive Director of the Friends of the Public Garden, proposed to replicate the existing granite Union bench and install the new bench in a location on the Mall between Arlington and Berkeley Streets.

Vizza explained that the bench was created for Civil War veterans, and Margaret Pokorny=, also of the Friends, added that it is about 30 or 40 years old.

The bench to be replicated is cast stone, but the replica will be granite and more resistant to the elements, Pokorny said.

Though the two benches would be very similar, the existing bench has some curves and details that were not in the rendering of the proposed bench, and Commissioner Brad Walker added that "people are looking at this Union bench" as a "marker of some previous event in our culture. I find it curious to almost replicate it for a different purpose for a different time." He wondered if there might be any interest in commissioning a new design for a granite bench instead.

Vizza said that the Friends of the Public Garden have decided to be "conservative" with the design for "historic purposes."

"Picking something to replicate is just as conscious as doing something new," Walker said. "Why is it only partially replicated?"

Pokorny said that the goal was not to make the new bench an "exact replication," and the donor decided that the proposed design was a good one.

Commissioner David Berarducci said he would like to see the curve in between the legs and under the seat that is on the existing bench to be in the replica as well.

The Commisison voted to approve the bench with the provisos that there is more detailing on the inside of the arm rest, the bottom skirt has the curved detailing, and extend one or both of the bases on the bench to improve accessibility.

ARLINGTON STREET CHURCH

Applicant Adam Wylie said that he had come before the Commission last year to get approval for the landscaping plan for the Arlington St. elevation of the Arlington St. Church, and that he has returned seeking approval for the plan for the Boylston St. side.

Landscape architect Toby Wolf said that the Boylston St. side is sunnier and the bed is deeper, so the proposed plantings will differ from the Arlington St. side.

He said that the plantings on the Arlington St. side that were planted in the fall of last year have "come in well this year," and that for the existing Boylston St. bed, there were some weeds and invasive plants.

He proposed building a walkway and new plantings, but said that it is "not a sidewalk," but would be "accessible for most of its length."

He said that "I wanted to make this something that's attractive but not a feature."

Wolf said that the proposed walk would be paved in Goshen stone, which would give the walkway a "glossier look" and provide more contrast with the matte brownstone on the church.

"We're not expecting people to use this in any great numbers," Wold said, adding that the plantings alongside the walkway would be "drifts of different plants that melt into one another. These are not hard lines."

He said that since this site is sunnier than the other side, he was "careful about choosing plants that will work well together and form a stable plant community."

Commissioner Christopher Hart had concerns with the lack of accessibility in the front of the church, but other Commissioners said that the landscaping work proposed would not prevent the installation of a ramp in the future.

Berarducci said that he "acknowledges" that no official decision has been made as to which side the ramp would be installed on. "We would be approving this with the knowledge that it could be very well ripped up if the ramp is on the other side."

The Commission voted to approve the landscaping work for the Boylstonn St. side of the church.

ADVISORY REVIEW

Nathan Frazee, a project manager for the City of Boston Parks Deparrtment, said that the Master Plan document for the Boston Common Master Plan should be ready by this coming spring, and the proposals presented at last week's BLC hearing include many "big picture ideas" that are not currently funded. He said that the project team will come before the BLC again "once things are more detailed in certain areas."

Cheri Ruane of Weston & Sampson talked about several different areas of the Master Plan, including the Frog Pond and the Visitor Information Center, both of which have receved lots of community input.

She said that recommended features of the Frog Pond Pavilion renovation include expanding the existing 3,500 square foot pavilion into a new multi-level, 13,000 square foot building. Additionally, other proposal include planting more trees to increase shade, expanding the children's playground, creating more seating options, and providing the infrastructure for multi-season events and other programming.

A splash pad is also proposed for one side of the Frog Pond that would include "spray elements with no standing water," and the pond would deepen moving down the other way. When not in use, the spray area can have tables and chairs with umbrellas, Ruane explained.

Ruane also said that there is the potential to increase the amount of area used for ice skating in the winter.

For the Visitor Information Center, Ruane said the proposal includes expanding the footprint and "establishing a pedestrian connection between the Visitor Information Center and the Mayor's Walk."

There will also be pathway connections to the King Memorial that will be on the Common as well. Additionally, there will be expanded seating options as well as increased park wayfinding, and changes to the entrances and gateways.

The Boston Common Master Plan has a long way to go with the Landmarks Commission and other approvals, but there will be more opportunity for the public to hear and respond to proposals moving forward into next spring.

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Attention to Detail

By Penny Cherubino

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER

The light in the last clue is on 23 Holyoke Street. This was the home of Susie Baker King Tayor who was born a slave and went on to become a nurse and teacher during the Civil War. After moving to Boston, she was appointed the President of the Corps 67, Women's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.

The next clue will be found in the Back Bay.

Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

THIS WEEK'S CLUE

Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
BACK BAY			
Hall, Stephen	Robbins, Robert	121 Beacon St #4	$1,265,000
Parrish Grandchildrens T	Lesley Louise Johnson	247 Beacon St #3	$415,000
Bern, Laurel A	Frost, Karen T	114 Commonwealth Ave #2	$1,310,000
Weed, Rachel	Dee, John F	24 Marlborough St #2	$1,730,000
Menegatti, Christian	Richards, Daniel L	109 Saint Botolph St #2	$2,638,000
BEACON HILL			
Capozzi, Anthony	Steen, James F	87 Beacon St #1	$1,900,000
Harris, Cailin	Znutas, Mark J	1 Goodwin Pl #1	$775,000
Herring, Bruce	JDMD Owner LLC	45 Temple St #PH2	$8,000,000
SLauria, Janell	Beltrami, Alexandra	6 Whittier Pl #11F	$440,000
BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE			
Sapienza LLC	Langwell, Dennis J	1 Charles St S #15G	$1,950,000
Pinkham, Andrew	Grover, Chad	26 Melrose St #4	$1,160,000
Koh, Cheryl M	Hyder, Arthur F	181 Warren Ave #1	$1,250,000
Burns, Catherine	Sullivan, Edward	2 Cumberland St #1	$1,125,000
Nguyen, Mary C	Congo, Catherine M	424 Massachusetts Ave #402	$1,117,500
Alexandrescu, Sanda	22 Medfield Street LLC	22 Medfield St #4	$845,000
Pinkham, Andrew	Grover, Chad	26 Melrose St #4	$1,160,000
Karnik, Sandeep	Edna Harrington T	16 Miner St #204	$915,000
ommerkamp, Gifford S	Sommerkamp, Meghan K	587 Tremont St #3	$180,744
Kent, Suzanne	Hughes, James	30 Union Park St #406	$421,269
Nistler, Ryan J	Dowd, Kyle R	28 Upton St #5	$1,030,000
Healey, Joseph	Stempniak, Lee	168 W Brookline St #1	$2,580,000
Mcandrew, David	Plotnikov, Viktor	80 Waltham St #1	$795,000
Koh, Cheryl M	Hyder, Arthur F	181 Warren Ave #1	$1,250,000
ran, Dorothy P	Harris, Conor S	36 Worcester St #3	$605,000
WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN			TJean M
Wackrow LT	BOW LLC	2 Battery Wharf #3311	$3,650,000
Savy, Joseph	Savy, Paige R	110-112 Commercial St #4	$200,000
Ferrara, Kathleen	Vaickus, Louis	580 Washington St #1202	$1,900,000

bpda | **Virtual Public Meeting**

220 Huntington Ave

Thursday, December 3
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/220Huntington12-03
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 161 015 9471

Project Proponent:
National Development

Project Description:
The 220 Huntington Avenue project includes the development of an approximately 351,500 square foot mixed-use building containing approximately 325 residential rental units, approximately 17,000 square feet of retail/ restaurant space and 153 parking spaces. The Project will be located on an approximately 66,600 square foot site consisting of two properties known as the Midtown Hotel at 220 Huntington Avenue, and 1 Cumberland Avenue.

This is the first public meeting for the proposed project. It will provide an opportunity for the National Development team to share their vision for the project and hear community feedback.

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:
12/5/2020

BostonPlans.org | @BostonPlans
Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

Boston Police stop 'sovereign citizen' terror plot at Ruggles on Thanksgiving

Staff report

A Dorchester man was arrested on Thanksgiving and charged with illegally carrying a loaded pistol. The defendant, who allegedly purchased a firearm and body armor, and material that could be used to assemble explosives, adheres to the anti-government/anti-authority sovereign citizen extremist ideology.

Pepo Herd El a/k/a Pepo Wamchawi Herd (El), 47, of Dorchester, was charged by criminal complaint with one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition. Following an initial appearance, El was detained pending a detention hearing scheduled for Dec. 2, 2020.

According to the criminal complaint, El is suspected of compiling chemicals that can be used to manufacture explosives and has been under law enforcement surveillance.

It is alleged that in the early afternoon of Nov. 26, 2020, El took a bus from his house in Dorchester to the Ruggles MBTA station. At Ruggles, El was detained and searched pursuant to a search warrant. During that search, law enforcement discovered that El was in possession of a loaded pistol, three spare magazines that were also fully loaded, a knife and a bullet-proof vest. El was also wearing a security jacket although he is not believed to work as a security guard. Due to a 2004 state conviction for possessing firearms without permits, El is prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition. The investigation remains ongoing.

The charging statute provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of $250,000.

For the Record

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: Due to public health concerns, the hearings that nor-mally 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.

•BPDA: Boston University Medical Campus Task Force Meeting - Thursday, De-cember 3, 6 p.m. Please register in advance at the following link: www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_Vl-E5Sk8RqmNzPiXH5X58Q

•BPDA: 220 Huntington Ave. (Midtown Hotel) Virtual Public Meeting, Thursday, Dec. 3, 6 p.m. This is the first public meeting for the proposed redevelopment of the Midtown Hotel at 220 Huntington Avenue in the Back Bay neighborhood. It will provide an opportunity for the National Development team to share their vision for the project and hear community feedback.

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.

•Bay Village Monthly meeting, Monday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m. Online via Zoom. Check website for more details.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS HEARING: The Committee will hold a Dec. 3, 10 a.m., hearing for a special law re: Preference for Boston High School Graduates for the Position of Police Officers in the City of Boston. The Chair of the Committee is Councilor Lydia Edwards. The sponsor of the docket is Mayor Martin J. Walsh.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES HEARING:

A Dec. 4, 11:30 a.m., hearing to discuss safety of construction sites in the City of Boston. This matter was sponsored by Councilor Ed Flynn, and referred to the Committee on January 15, 2020.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS WORKING SESSION:

A Dec. 7, 10 a.m., working session regarding an ordinance on surveillance over-sight and information sharing. This matter was sponsored by Councilors Ricardo Arroyo, Kim Janey, and Michelle Wu. It was referred to the Committee on May 6, 2020.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON ARTS, CULTURE, AND SPECIAL EVENTS HEARING:

A Dec. 7, 2 p.m., hearing regarding the creation of a Boston Sestercentennial Commission to mark the 250th anniversary of 1776. This matter was spon-sored by Kenzie Bok, and referred to the Committee on September 23, 2020.

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HEARING: Order for a Dec. 8, 11 a.m., hearing regarding increasing Public Housing. The Chair of the Committee is Councilor Edwards and the sponsor is Councilor Bok.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH HEARING: A hearing regarding appointments to the Boston Public Health Commission's Board of Health, includ-ing Rebecca Gutman (expiring Jan. 15, 2023), Manny Lopes (expiring Jan. 15, 2023), and Guale Valdez (expiring Jan. 15, 2022).

From the Dec. 8 Bay Village Historic District Commission, 4 p.m., online via Zoom (HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84594473252):

DESIGN REVIEW

•119 Berkeley Street: At front façade construct handicapped entry ramp.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL

•22 Church Street: At side elevation repoint masonry.

From the Dec. 8 Boston Landmarks Commission, 4 p.m., online via Zoom (HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/85032798225):

DESIGN REVIEW

•Museum of Fine Arts – 465 Huntington Avenue: At Fenway façade create opening for window to provide natural light to basement area space. Work in-cludes adding a new window opening, installing a new window, new cladding at basement, new landscape curbing, and relocate an existing lighting fixture.

BUSINESS MEETING

•Discussion and vote on design review applications.

•Preliminary Hearing: 1 Cumberland Street, St. Botolph Architectural Conser-vation District Boundary Correction/Amendment.

From the Dec. 9 Back Bay Architectural Commission meeting, 4:30 p.m., online via Zoom (HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/81744209539):

VIOLATIONS

•283 Dartmouth Street: Unapproved electronic signage in window.

DESIGN REVIEW

•545 Boylston Street: Extend approval for banner to 12/31/2021.

•497 Beacon Street: At front facade remove commercial signage, canopy, non-original doors and windows, and brick veneer and cement plaster; excavate front yard for window well; install new brick veneer and cast iron railing with stone curbing; and at rear elevation demolish commercial infill, restore mason-ry, and add access stair and ground cover.

•222 Commonwealth Avenue: Re-landscape front and rear yards, replace win-dows, construct steel balconies at rear elevation, and construct penthouse and roof deck.

ADVISORY REVIEW

•222 Commonwealth Avenue: At rear elevation construct one-story addition.

FIRST THURSDAYS AT THE GARDNER MUSEUM

First Thursdays are back at the Gardner Museum! Entry is free on the first Thursday of each month from 3-9 p.m., 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.

FREE BPS BREAKFAST IN SOUTH END/FENWAY

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

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 pres-sured into an unsafe situation. Attorney General Maura Healey has created re-sources 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.

ZBA approves five condos on Mass. Ave.

By Lauren Bennett

The Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) on Tuesday approved a proposal at 541 Massachusetts Ave. to change the occupancy of the building, which is currently legally a lodging house and church, to five residential units.

Zoning violations include excessive lot area, excessive Floor Area Ratio, insufficient rear yard, and no off-street parking is proposed. Additionally, a variance is needed since four units is what is allowed in a rowhouse district but five are being proposed.

Attorney Matt Eckel said that the proposal also includes renovation of the building and the installation of a sprinkler system. Currently, the upper floors are used as residences for the family of the church. An earlier proposal was for seven condominium units, but after discussion with the community, it was lowered to five.

Eckel said that he thinks this project is "consistent" with the rest of the neighborhood and the team has worked with the community to lower the number of units. He also mentioned a deck space that currently exists but will be made "more functional" for future residents of the building.

Kim Crucioli of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services said that an abutters meeting was held in August, and "in general," there were "no major concerns." She said that the Chester Square Neighbors and direct abutters provided letters of support. City Councilor Kim Janey was also in support of the project.

The ZBA voted to approve the project as presented.

LEGAL NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Self Storage Sale

Please take notice Prime Storage - Boston Southampton St. located at 100 Southampton St., Boston, MA 02118 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility. The sale will occur as an online auction via www.storagetreasures.com on 12/14/2020 at 12:00 PM. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods and furnishings. Elmore Lawrence unit #3053; Chanel Smith unit #3170; Shuang Yang unit #3252; Jaclyn Walsh unit #4037; Danny Mccoy unit #4046; Mary-Kate Jurek unit #4053; Evelyn Simpkins unit #5044. All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details.

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Please take notice Prime Storage - Boston Traveler St. located at 33 Traveler St., Boston, MA 02118 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility. The sale will occur as an online auction via www.storagetreasures.com on 12/14/2020 at 12:00 PM. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods and furnishings. Joseph Floyd Twombley unit #210; Gregory McNeil unit #323; Claudia Camerino unit #652. All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details.

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$7,990,000

401 Beacon Street #4
3 Beds | 2.5 Baths |2,877 SQFT
$5,990,000

492 Beacon Street #14
2 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,273 SQFT
$1,250,000

60 Chestnut Street
4 Bed | 4.5 Baths | 3,282 SQFT
$5,950,000

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