

# THE BOSTON SUN

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## Vaccine Quest

Sleepy-eyed seniors finally find vaccine appointments

By Seth Daniel

The alarm clock shown 2 a.m. on Jan. 25, and it wasn't the usual time that Southender Ed LeMay rises for the day, but with the hopes of getting a vaccine appointment, he thought the early bird might get the proverbial worm.

No, such luck though.

He didn't think much of it, but what it turned into for himself and thousands of senior citizens over the age of 75 was a trying online quest to find anywhere – and really anywhere – that might have an open appointment for COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

While the strain on the system and the nerves has diminished somewhat with Fenway Park and the Reggie Lewis Center coming online, LeMay said

there were a series of about four days last week when sleepy-eyed seniors burned the candle at both ends – working all the networks they had – to find a place where they could get vaccinated.

“I woke up at 2 a.m. on Jan. 25 and went to my computer and fired it up,” said LeMay. “I soon found that all the places in the area had ‘none available.’ I turned off my computer and went back to sleep. About 7 a.m., I got back on and checked about every half-hour and then started communicating with other seniors I know.”

As part of the South End Seniors group, and also his book club, LeMay turned to those networks to get help when he found that making an appointment

(VACCINE QUEST, Pg. 7)

## Letter of Intent filed with BPDA regarding Fenway redevelopment proposal

By Lauren Bennett

On January 29, WS-Fenway-Twins Realty Venture LLC filed a Letter of Intent with the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) to file a Project Notification Form (PNF) to redevelop various parcels near Fenway Park. The project would undergo the BPDA's Article 80 Large Project Review process, which offers opportunities for the public to make comments and ask questions about the proposal.

The properties proposed for redevelopment include: 70 and 85 Van Ness Street, 19-23, 25-27, and 31-37 Jersey Street, 73-89, 78-88, 92, 100-102, 104-106, and 110-114 Brookline Avenue, and 45-47 and 49-67 Lansdowne St.

“These properties (along with

MassDOT Turnpike Air Rights Parcel 8, for which an affiliate of the Proponent has been designated as the developer) collectively make up approximately 8 acres in the Fenway neighborhood owned or controlled by the Proponent and are all located proximate to Fenway Park,” the Letter of Intent states.

The letter goes on to say that the proposed project includes around 2.1 million square feet of space that will be used for “commercial, residential, retail, restaurant, and other uses within 8 new buildings reflecting a wide range of scales and architectural styles, and including several structures whose historic facades will be restored to preserve the unique character of Fenway's architectural heritage.” Other improvements to the public realm are

(FENWAY REDEVELOPMENT, Pg. 3)



Shown above, a vaccine preparer puts the appropriate dose of the Pfizer vaccine into a syringe. Shown to the left, Wally the Green Monster donned his face mask, doctor's coat, and stethoscope to cheer on residents as they got their vaccines last Friday.

## From baseball to voting to vaccinations: Mass vaccination clinic in full swing at the ballpark

By Lauren Bennett

When people think of Fenway Park, certain things may come to mind: watching the game with friends and family, Fenway Franks, and Wally the Green Monster. Now, people are depending on the historic ballpark to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Fenway Park has officially become a mass vaccination site, with a soft opening on Friday, January 29 and an official opening on February 1, where it began vaccinating individuals

aged 75 and older per the state vaccination plan.

The vaccination site is run by Cambridge-based CIC Health in conjunction with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as well as the Boston Red Sox and contracted health care delivery coordinators such as Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Cataldo Ambulance, DMSE sports, and PWN Health.

The vaccination site team said they wanted the process to be as smooth as possible for people, and have created an experience that aims to get people in and out

within 45 minutes to an hour.

The team explained that first, people check in at one of the check-in stations, then they are brought over to the vaccination area where they spend about five minutes with the person administering the vaccine. Then, they move to the waiting area to monitor for any potential allergic reactions. After that, people are invited to take selfies and post them online spreading the word that they have been vaccinated. They even receive an “I Got Vac-

(FENWAY VACCINATIONS, Pg. 6)

## A Rare Leader: Sudden retirement of Commissioner Gross brings praise from officers

By Seth Daniel

Police Commissioner Willie Gross stunned the City and the Boston Police ranks on Thursday morning, Jan. 28, when he suddenly announced – with Mayor Martin Walsh – that he was retiring after 37 years and after being the first African American Police Commissioner in Boston for the

past three years.

The announcement came with an abrupt departure on Friday, and an announcement as well by Gross that he wouldn't be running for mayor – even though he had been considering it.

Instead, it became a time of reflection for those that served with and under him for many years – particularly police offi-

cers who came up with Gross through the ranks and came to appreciate Gross as a natural leader who always had time for those in the Department.

“He was a natural leader,” said Steve Fabiano, who currently serves on the Boston Police Department. “Everyone was

(COMMISSIONER GROSS, Pg. 8)

# EDITORIAL

## MINIMUM WAGE SHOULD BE AT \$15

In 1971, the minimum wage across the United States, as mandated by federal law, was \$1.60.

Today, the federal minimum stands at \$7.25.

One might look at those two numbers and think that because the minimum wage has increased by more than four-fold in the past 50 years, America's lowest-paid workers are doing alright compared to their grandparents.

But the reality is far different.

In fact, had the federal minimum wage kept pace with workers' productivity in the past five decades, the inflation-adjusted minimum wage would be \$24 an hour.

The reality of the \$7.25 minimum wage, which has been at that level since 2009, is that a person working a full-time job at the minimum wage officially falls below the national poverty level, a reality that would be laughably absurd if it were not so harmful to millions of Americans.

President Joe Biden has proposed increasing the minimum wage across the country to \$15.00 by 2024, essentially bringing it into line with Massachusetts and a few other states that already are near or at that level. (The minimum wage in Massachusetts presently stands at \$13.50 and will increase incrementally here and in seven other states to \$15.00 within the next two years.)

Raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025 would raise wages of up to 27.3 million workers -- almost 20 percent of American workers -- and lift 1.3 million families out of poverty, according to a report by the Congressional Budget Office.

Some on the political spectrum speak exultingly about the dignity of work.

But they ignore the other side of the equation, which is that it is below the dignity of anyone to work for wages that amount to not much better than slave labor.

The time has come to raise the minimum wage and yes, to Make America Great Again -- for everybody.

## OREGON LEADS THE WAY ON DRUGS

For more than 50 years, America has been fighting the "war on drugs," an endeavor that began under the administration of President Richard M. Nixon, who had the avowed purpose of arresting and incarcerating as many Blacks and other minorities as possible, especially for simple possession of marijuana.

The war on drugs has been a failure by any measure. Not only have we spent hundreds of billions of dollars on failed law enforcement efforts both in this country and around the globe, directly leading to the destabilization of many nations that has had profound effects both for those countries and ours, but it is fair to say that the drug war has destroyed the lives of more individuals, families, and communities than the drugs themselves.

Thanks to the war on drugs, the prison population in the United States exceeds every other nation on earth, both in terms of sheer numbers and based on population.

At long last, after 50 years of fruitless and costly failure, things are about to change.

Voters in the State of Oregon recently approved a ballot question that decriminalizes the possession of illegal drugs. Instead of throwing people in jail, the state will view drug use as a health issue, offering addicts treatment instead of prison time.

In Portugal, this approach has been used for 20 years. The result has been stunning. Drug overdose deaths and HIV and other drug-related infections have decreased dramatically. In addition, the removal of criminal penalties did NOT increase the rate of drug use.

The time has come for our society to acknowledge that the war on drugs, which was based on racism to begin with, must come to an end.

Oregon is leading the way -- and change is coming none too soon.



THE ECONOMY IS A TWO WAY STREET

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### BOSTON WARD 4 DEMS MEETING -- TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 6 PM

Dear Editor,  
Join Democrats from Back Bay, Fenway, and the South End

for our monthly meeting. We will be hearing an update from Enid Eckstein of the PILOT Action Group, and hearing from City Councilor Andrea Campbell about her candidacy for mayor

and David Halbert about his candidacy for Boston City Council At-Large. Email ward4dems@gmail.com for Zoom information.

Boston Ward 4 Dems

## Walsh, Martinez discuss COVID-19 and vaccination update for residents

By Lauren Bennett

On Monday, Mayor Martin Walsh provided an update on COVID-19 in Boston, saying that the numbers have improved over the past few weeks, but people need to continue to take precautions to prevent the spread of the virus.

February 1 marked Boston's re-entry into Step One of Phase Three of the state's reopening plan. The list of businesses permitted to reopen with restrictions can be found at [boston.gov/reopening](http://boston.gov/reopening).

Walsh also told residents that they should not gather for the Super Bowl this coming Sunday, and to ensure that testing is "part of your routine." Boston has more than 30 testing sites, and information about where to get a test can be found at [boston.gov/coronavirus](http://boston.gov/coronavirus).

"We continue to work with the state on COVID-19 vaccine rollouts," Walsh said, as well as "expanding vaccination sites to ensure that every community has

equitable access to vaccines."

The Reggie Lewis Center also opened as a mass vaccination clinic on February 2, and is equipped to administer about 1000 vaccinations per week, Walsh said. Many eligible residents have also said they are frustrated with the process for signing up for a vaccine across the state.

"The rollout has caused frustration; it's been a confusing and inefficient process, especially for those who do not have access to the internet," Walsh said. He said the city is working to make

people aware of the vaccination program.

Chief of Health and Human Services Marty Martinez said that the city is "actively preparing for phases to come." As of February 1, those 75 and older are now eligible to receive the vaccine.

Martinez also said the city is pursuing partnerships with places like community based clinics "over the next several weeks," and "for the city, we'll continue to do that and make sure folks can get access when necessary along the way."

## THE BOSTON SUN

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# BPS submits budget heavy on social-emotional help, addressing enrollment dips

By Seth Daniel

The Boston Public Schools (BPS) submitted its budget proposal to the School Committee Wednesday night, and it was a budget that included a \$36 million increase in funding over last year in what is the second year of a \$100 million commitment made by Mayor Martin Walsh in January 2020.

The budget submission is being titled 'Return, Recover and Re-Imagine,' and focuses heavily on health and wellness and the resources that are believed to be necessary once children return to school next fall with the weight of COVID-19 still lingering even if the pandemic is over.

The overall budget is \$1.29 billion and is the largest appropriation for the schools ever made in the history of BPS.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly exposed inequities that persisted for our students for far too long, and this recovery budget is centered on student services and supports to immediately address concerns and promote an equitable recovery," said BPS Superintendent, Brenda Cassellius. "This student-centered and community-focused recovery budget proposal builds upon our investments made last year in student and family advancement, at a time when our community is most in need. As we move forward and recover from the pandemic, we remain committed to a safe return, opening access and closing achievement gaps, and ensuring an excellent and equitable education for all students, particularly our students most impacted this past year."

CFO Nate Kuder said it is unprecedented for a major school district to be expanding its budget in the times of COVID-19. He said Boston is really fortunate that the City has continued its commitment of \$36 million in the second year when financial times are so uncertain.

"Boston stands alone in increasing financial investments to schools," he said. One of the key measures is per pupil expenditures. This year, he said, that has gone up by \$1,700 per student to \$23,500 per student. One of the biggest worries has been the trauma and educational setbacks that students and their families might bring with them when they return to school buildings for the first time in a year. That is why Cassellius said they hired 95 new full-time social workers for the schools, and 80.5 new full-time multi-lingual family liaisons. Already, last year, in the first year of the five-year transformation plan, several social workers and liaisons were hired as well, and Cassellius said their work has been critical to families and students over the pandemic. One major funding piece that still falls into uncertain waters is how to deal with declining

enrollments due to the pandemic. Typically, schools are funded by the numbers of students they have enrolled. However, during COVID-19, enrollments have plummeted in BPS. No one is quite sure why, and no one knows if it will continue. However, Kuder said they would be investing \$18.5 million into schools with declining enrollment to make sure they are not penalized for the situation.

"The drop in enrollment is real and significant," he said. "We don't know what the future will hold for enrollment. But we want students to return to school with the same programs and specials like music and art – and with social workers and liaisons... We don't know where it will be at next year. We don't as a district want to close capacity for some facilities and then a lot of new families show up and we have to open capacity and quickly re-hire teachers."

Instead, they will invest that

\$18.5 million in making up for any enrollment declines that persist into next fall. Cassellius did confirm that there would be no new school closures next year that aren't already planned. Facilities also have a big part of the budget too, and an investment last year in custodial staff has continued this year – but this time it is more important than ever due to the needs of COVID-19 and keeping buildings safe. With that, an additional \$1.417 million has been invested in adding more daytime custodians to the district's school facilities. There will be additional budget hearings for the community to participate in over the coming month. On Thursday, Feb. 11, there will be another budget hearing online; and it will be discussed again at the Feb. 24 School Committee meeting also. The School Committee Budget vote is expected on March 24.

## FENWAY REDEVELOPMENT (from pg. 1)

also proposed, according to the letter.

The proposed project also includes more than 30,000 square feet of public open space along Jersey Street "by permanently pedestrianizing the existing Jersey Street roadway between Van Ness Street and Brookline Avenue and creating a new year-round public gathering space along the Jersey Street frontage of Fenway Park," the letter states, adding that doing so will "significantly enhance public pedestrian connectivity and the quality of the public experience in the area."

The project proponent also said in the letter that the "guiding principle" for the project "is to allow the city fabric to envelop and embrace the historic ballpark and create welcoming, people-first places and buildings that contribute to the quality and vitality of the public realm in the heart of the Fenway neighborhood year-round."

According to the BPDA, the filing of a Letter of Intent also prompts the beginning of the nomination process for an Impact Advisory Group (IAG) for a project, which consists of members of the community nominated to help with mitigation efforts in the community for a particular project.

The Sun reported in Octo-

ber of 2020 that Fenway Sports Group Real Estate, '47 Brand, which is owned by the D'Angelo family, and WS Development had announced a partnership to redevelop parcels in the Fenway, and the development team had said that community input would be an important part of the process.

Several Fenway residents told the Sun that they did not feel the community was being put first, and hoped that things would turn around as the project got further underway.

In the Letter of Intent, the proponent said that it is "committed to delivering a development program that reflects and respects the unique character and history of the Fenway neighborhood, and also encourages a broad and diverse audience of visitors to enjoy these transformed settings," and that they hope to "work closely with all interested parties in connection with the Project's review process, including our neighbors in the Fenway community, the Impact Advisory Group, the BPDA and other city agencies, and other community stakeholders."

Fenway resident and community activist Kristen Mobilia said that she feels the lack of a master plan for the Fenway neighborhood is really taking a toll on residents as more and more devel-

opment projects get underway.

She said that she believes that money is being put ahead of people. "Residents don't seem to matter in this whole big plan, or lack of plan," she said.

Mobilia said that development projects are "not being looked at collectively," and that the "city and the BPDA have dropped the ball completely." She said that there is still no transportation plan for the neighborhood and with "increased entertainment activity" planned for the neighborhood with projects like the MGM Music Hall, there will be "more people coming to the area at all times of the year and all hours of the day."

She continued, "We brought this up at every public meeting. Nobody does anything."

Regarding this proposed project, Mobilia added that "residents are expecting more of the same," but she believes the real problem is that "the whole neighborhood is not being looked at as an aggregate."

She said that "the Red Sox have the power to make this be

more of a focus. That's what we're asking them to do," adding that this project is "supposed to be family friendly and bring joy to the world," so "that falls under that umbrella."

City Councilor Kenzie Bok also weighed in on the news, saying that "I am looking forward to hearing from the community on their vision for the area around Fenway Park as we engage with all the development partners in a serious community planning process. The size of the parcels at play in this proposal necessitate a master plan that takes into consideration all of the needs and hopes of the Fenway neighborhood and the larger Boston community -- from an accessible and pedestrian-friendly public realm to housing affordability, public school and other community facilities, support for local businesses, active transportation access, and a true next-generation degree of sustainability. With a really inclusive process, this can become a transformative plan for the Fenway neighborhood."

mobilia said that the proposal to save historic facades as part of this project is "welcome news," but she said she would also like to see public art both inside and outside of buildings that depicts and explains the history of the Fenway neighborhood outside of baseball. She said that there have been some "missed opportunities in the past to do so," and now "there's room for improvement and we welcome having a better relationship there."

Mobilia also said that she would like to see the retail space allow for small, local businesses to operate, and other amenities for the neighborhood, such as a childcare facility or even an elementary school would be very welcome, as the neighborhood does not have its own elementary school.

"We've got to start thinking differently," she said. "People care deeply about this neighborhood. This is our home, not just a playground for people at Fenway Park."

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# Weekly positive test rate down second week in a row

By John Lynds

Last week the cumulative COVID-19 positive test rate in Back Bay and the surrounding neighborhoods increased while the weekly positive test rate decreased for a second week in a row.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) last Friday, overall since the pandemic started 43,271 Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End and Downtown residents have been tested for COVID-19 and the data shows that 5.7 percent of those tested were COVID positive—a 7.5 percent increase from the 5.3 percent two weeks ago.

Last week 3,101 residents were tested and 3.2 were positive—a 8.6 percent decrease from the 3.5 reported two Fridays ago.

Citywide, 34,780 residents were tested and 6.8 percent were COVID positive—a 5.5 percent decrease from the 7.2 percent testing positive two weeks ago.

At a press briefing Monday Mayor Martin Walsh said while the numbers are moving in the right directions, residents still need to remain vigilant.

“The average number of positive tests each day was about 375, also down from the week before,” said Mayor Walsh. “Our current community positivity rate was 6.8 percent. That is lower than the week before, and down 1.6 percentage points over the last two weeks.”

The Mayor said that, throughout the pandemic, Boston has taken a cautious approach to reopening, and only moves forward with reopening if public health experts say it’s safe.

“In recent weeks, we’ve

seen some improvement in our COVID numbers,” said Walsh. “That is why we are moving into Phase 3 Step 1 today (Monday). You can go to [Boston.gov/Reopening](http://Boston.gov/Reopening) to find the list of businesses allowed to reopen.”

The Mayor also mentioned that, last week, the State moved Boston from “high risk” to “moderate risk” on their map, which is encouraging news. However, Walsh warned that we must stay vigilant.

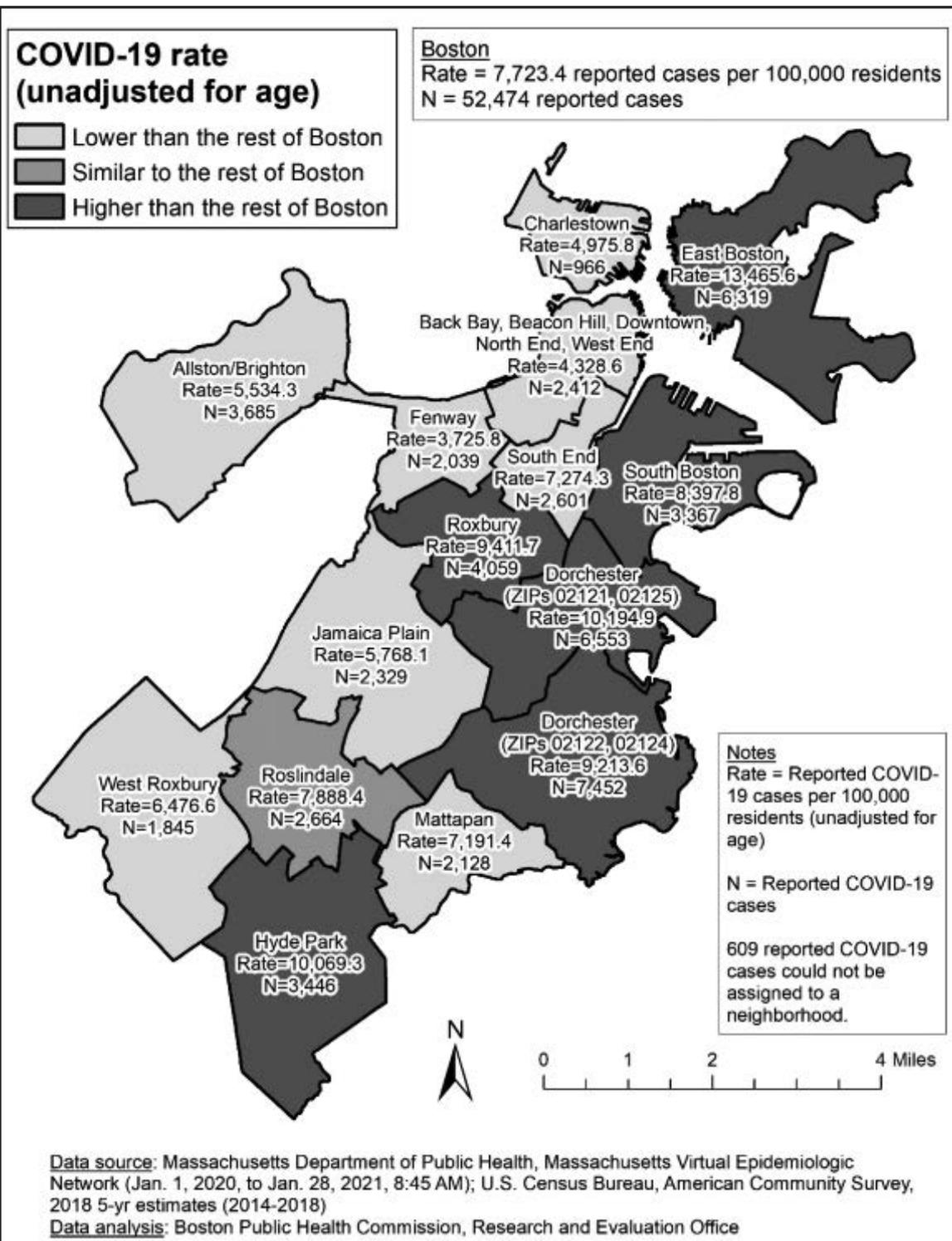
“The numbers could change any time,” he said. “Every single person has a role to play in keeping these numbers down. Everyone can take actions on a daily basis to protect themselves and their loved ones. He reminded everyone to wear a mask; social distance; wash your hands with soap and warm water; disinfect surfaces; and avoid gatherings.”

With Super Bowl Sunday coming up next weekend, he asked everyone to refrain from gathering with people outside your household. He also reminded everyone to make testing a part of your routine.

“We have over 30 testing sites including mobile sites that are free and open to all, regardless of symptoms. Visit [Boston.gov](http://Boston.gov) or call 3-1-1 for complete details,” said Walsh.

The Mayor ended his press briefing by recognizing that February 1, marked one year since the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Boston, and that none of us knew what to expect a year ago.

“The pandemic has turned our city, and our world, upside down,” said Walsh. “Living with this virus hasn’t been easy. It’s been especially hard for communities who have already



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

faced deep, historic disparities in health and economic outcomes. And we’ve all had to make sacrifices. But we’ve also seen countless examples of Bostonians coming together. And that spirit helps us keep our chins up, when times are especially tough. We need that now more than ever, because the virus is still with us, and will be with us for a while longer. But look where we are -- one year later, on February 1, 2021. Today, we’re moving forward with Phase 3, Step 1 of reopening -- one step closer to helping our economy recover, and getting life back to normal. We’re opening two vaccination sites: a mass vaccination site at Fenway Park, which opens today, and soon, a vaccination clinic at the Reggie Lewis Center in Roxbury, which will expand into a mass vaccination site. Thousands of peo-

ple have received the COVID-19 vaccine already, and we are working to make sure our most vulnerable residents get vaccinated as soon as possible. We also finally have a partner and leader in Washington who is committed to helping cities and states beat this virus. We have begun the process of healing. And we’re going to see it through, together. Thank you, again, to everyone for continuing to do your part, day in and out, to help us get through this crisis.”

The infection rate in Beacon Hill and surrounding neighborhoods increased 6.6 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 432.8 cases per 10,000 resi-

dents, up 6.6 percent from 405.9 cases per 10,000 residents.

One hundred fifty additional residents became infected with the virus last week and the total number of cases in the area increased from 2,262 cases to 2,412 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 increased 4.4 percent last week and went from 51,506 cases to 53,789 confirmed cases in a week. Thirty additional Boston residents died from the virus last week and there are now 1,163 total deaths in the city from COVID.



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# YW Boston building proposed to house previously homeless

By Dan Murphy

The building owned by YW Boston (formerly YWCA Boston) at the corner of Clarendon and Stuart streets in Back Bay is proposed for redevelopment into affordable housing, with half of its 210 planned units expected to go to people experiencing homelessness.

Beacon Communities intends to partner with the Pine Street Inn to renovate 50,000 square feet of space now comprising the existing 66-room Hotel 140 and 118 apartments into studio and one-bedroom rental units while the site's three largest commercial tenants, the Lyric Stage

Company of Boston, a nonprofit performing arts center; the Snowden International School; and YW Boston itself, would remain as part of the plan. There are also no exterior changes proposed for the historic 13-story building, and no new parking is planned for the project. (There are currently four spaces on site for staff).

Construction is expected to commence this summer, after the sale of the building is finalized, and to take around 20 months to complete, said members of the development team during a Jan. 13 virtual meeting sponsored by the Boston Planning and Develop-

ment Agency.

Tenants would be required to sign leases for a minimum of one year that "would be available into perpetuity," said Dara Kovel, CEO of Beacon Communities and they would all be screened via the process used by the Boston Housing Authority, which is also partnering on the project.

"We're looking to find people who can be meaningful members of the community inside the building and outside it as well," said Kovel, who added that all of the 79 existing tenants of affordable units would be "rehoused" during and after the renovation, although they might be relocated to other units in the building.

Besides having a full-time front-desk staff to make sure all guests check in, as well as two security guards on the premises 24/7, Lyndia Downie, president and executive director of the Pine Street Inn, said the building would also have staff on site to offer "wraparound services" to tenants.

State Rep. Jay Livingstone, a Back Bay resident whose district stops just short of the project site, said while he understands the

concerns voiced by some neighbors over some of the building's future tenants potentially being past criminal or sexual offenders, he said he is confident the staff is more than up to the task, since, as he said, "the mix of service providers here is the best in the City of Boston."

Added Rep. Livingstone: "I have a lot of faith that the project will be successful and really fit in the fabric of Back Bay [where] affordable housing is desperately needed."

Lauren Brody, chief of staff to City Councilor Kenzie Bok, said as a strong proponent of affordable housing in the city, Councilor Bok also supports the project.

Nancy Armstrong, a member of the Impact Advisory Group for the project and director of operations for the Women's Lunch Place staff member, said, "It's so well thought out and not a departure from what's there now, so I think it's just a wonderful project."

The city is accepting public comments on the project until Feb. 4, said Nupoor Manani, BPDA project manager; visit <http://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-proj->



The Back Bay building owned by YW Boston, which is proposed for redevelopment into affordable housing.

# Super Sunday: No Super Bowl team, no problem

By Seth Daniel

The New England Patriots might not be front and center this year, and maybe our quarterback is wintering in Florida this time around, but Boston still ranks as the third best city for football fans this season, according to the annual Super Bowl rankings done by WalletHub.

Every year, the company does an analysis based on several metrics about which city has the best football fans. Naturally, with the Patriots on top – and despite a meager following of college football, which is also ranked – Boston has come out in the top part of the list for years. Even with some of the magic missing, this year Boston landed and #3 for the best football town.

"Boston is the third best football city for fans," said WalletHub Analyst Jill Gonzalez. "The Patriots' performance level is the sixth highest among NFL teams, and they've won six NFL Championships, topping all the other teams. They also have 21 division championship wins, the fourth most, and the second highest franchise value in the country. Other reasons why Boston ranks so high include fan engagement, attendance, popularity, and the fact that they've had the same coach for the past ten seasons."

This year, Boston ranked only behind Pittsburgh and Dallas, and Pittsburgh ended up on top mostly because it has a much higher following of college foot-

ball than Boston.

Dallas, of course, is Dallas.

The numbers were as follows:

- Pittsburgh – 62.61
- Dallas – 55.55
- Boston – 54.19
- New York City – 49.88
- Miami, FL – 48.61

In order to determine the best and worst cities for football fans, WalletHub compared 245 U.S. cities based on 21 relevant metrics. Each metric was graded on a 100-point scale, with a score of 100 representing the most favorable conditions for football fans.

For their sample, they chose cities with at least one professional football team (NFL) or at least one college football team (NCAA, including FBS and FCS). They grouped the cities by division — "Pro Football" and "College Football" — and assigned weights to each divisional category based on its popularity among fans.

Finally, they determined each city's weighted average across all metrics to calculate its overall score and used the resulting scores to rank-order our sample.

Due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the NCAA schedule for the 2019-2020 season, for some metrics we considered the values up to the 2018-2019 season. This helps to ensure a level comparison field among the teams.

Interestingly, Boston also tied Las Vegas and San Francisco for the most expensive ticket prices for a football game.

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## FENWAY VACCINATIONS (from pg. 1)

cinated at Fenway Park” button.

“We want to make sure people book their second appointment while they’re here,” said Rodrigo Martinez, Chief Marketing and Experience Officer at CIC Health. He said that around 95 percent of people have their second appointment booked before leaving the site, “which is fantastic, because then we know exactly when they’re coming and who do we need to reach out to to remind them or help them set up their second appointment.”

During a tour given to reporters on the day of the soft opening, several people were receiving their first shots. One woman said she didn’t feel anything during hers, and seemed pleased to have received the vaccine.

“As we scale up, we need to know how much time each portion of the site would take,” Martinez said.

### PREPARING THE VACCINE

Chris Kaufmann, Vaccine Specialist for the CIC team, said that this site is distributing the Pfizer

vaccine, which “comes to the site in a temperature controlled, ultra low temperature box with dry ice on it. From here, we’re putting it in ultra low freezers.”

Kaufmann said the freezers are set at minus 80 degrees Celsius, which is about minus 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The night before, the number of reservations is checked and the appropriate amount of vaccine is removed from the deep freezer and transferred to a pharmaceutical grade refrigerator to thaw. The morning of distribution, the vaccine is given to preparers to create syringes that will go into people’s arms.

At Fenway Park, the vaccine preparation happens at the bar area, which Kaufmann joked “sort of redefines getting a shot at the bar.”

Kaufmann explained that the vaccine is mixed with a sodium chloride solution and placed into government-provided syringes that enable six doses to be drawn out of each vial.

“MRNA is actually stored in

liquid nanoparticles that help with the absorption of the vaccine into the cells,” he said.

Kaufmann also explained that the locked freezer is in its own room, adding that “Pfizer is very good at GPS enabled temperature monitors on the box.” He said he receives emails when “something happens or if the product is released.” He said it can then be checked in on an Excel spreadsheet.

“We want the public to feel the confidence that someone with Chris’ expertise really brings to bear,” said Rachel Wilson, Chief Operating Officer for CIC Health. “We know where every dose is at any point thanks to his leadership. He’s been truly exceptional.”

### FENWAY’S ROLE IN VACCINATING RESIDENTS

Rachel Wilson told reporters last Friday, “We are absolutely thrilled to have our guests here. The state asked CIC Health to be the operator of the Fenway Park mass vaccination site and it has been a true privilege to be part of this journey.”

Beginning on February 1, 500 people had signed up to receive their vaccinations on that day, and the site will initially only be open Monday through Friday, but weekends will be added “very soon,” Wilson said. After beginning with 500 vaccinations per day, the site will eventually provide 1,250 vaccinations per day. Eligible residents can schedule an appointment at [cic-health.com/vaccines](http://cic-health.com/vaccines).

“We’re part of multiple mass vaccination sites,” she said. “We’re ready, willing, and able to serve as many people as we possibly can,” and hope to “scale up” as more and more vaccine becomes available.

Sarah McKenna, Senior Vice President of the Boston Red Sox, said that though she and the rest of the Red Sox team “want to see the ballpark full again,” they have “always understood our role in the community prior to that.”

Before becoming a mass vaccination site, Fenway Park was a voting location for many people during last year’s election.

“We had voting in this very location—where they’re getting their shots, that’s where they were casting their ballots in November,” McKenna said.

She continued, “No doubt, I mean Fenway has this amazing emotional impact on the region and the community as a whole but we think this is probably its greatest responsibility that it’s



Lisa Ivey and Linda Edge, both personal care attendants, spoke to reporters after receiving their first doses of the vaccine.

had certainly in a long, long, long time and maybe in its history overall,” McKenna said.

When asked how the site will operate once baseball starts back up, McKenna responded by saying, “We’ll make it work. I mean, that’s what we do. . You know if we are here giving shots on April 1...and if we are playing baseball that day, I promise you that there are people here that will move and we will make that work.”

Many people, especially in the Black and Brown communities that have been hit hardest by the virus, have reservations about receiving the vaccine.

“We obviously believe that the message needs to get out there,” Rodrigo. “And there’s no more effective way to have a campaign than to have everybody that comes here tell their family, their neighborhood, their friends the importance of vaccination.”

He said that “this is an emotional moment. It’s not just an important medical and clinical moment and we recognize that and we’ve designed the experience with that in mind,” and the hope is that people will share their experience on social media and encourage others to get vaccinated when they are eligible to.

Wilson said that the site is designed to avoid having people wait in line outdoors in the cold.

“Even in inclement weather, we want to be available for people to get their vaccines,” she said, and booking for appointments is done a week in advance. “We always have appointments further than that week that will help accommodate people who may choose to cancel their appointment,” she said, which will help avoid “discontinuity in their pair process for the vaccine.”

CIC Health also operates the Gillette Stadium mass vaccination site, and Wilson said that after operating that site for a little while, “we have designed and redesigned our workflows many times.” She said that the team is

working on figuring out the best number of check-in stations, staff on site, and number of vaccination stations needed per hour.

### ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE THE VACCINE

Lisa Ivey and Linda Edge are both personal care attendants who received their first doses at Fenway Park last Friday.

Ivey, a Fenway resident, said that she has been a home care worker since 2009. “I’m privileged to have the shot today,” she said. “I think it’s very imperative and important that on a federal and a state level that we are acknowledged, we are respected, and we are also protected because we provide care to those that are vulnerable.”

She said that she was hesitant to get the vaccine at first, but when she saw President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris “be responsible and be leaders from the front, it made it comfortable for us to be leaders within our family.”

She said the process of getting her vaccination was “very easy,” and she only felt “a little pinch.”

Linda Edge, formerly of Boston but now a Quincy resident, said that her patient has illnesses that put him at increased risk for the coronavirus. “I felt it was important for me, at least, to get the vaccine so I can care for him better,” she said.

She said the “location is excellent,” and she also felt better knowing she is protecting her elderly mother as well. Both women have signed up for their second doses as well, which are administered 21 days after the initial dose for the Pfizer vaccine.

“I’m really ecstatic to have this opportunity to be here because there are a lot of people who got petrified,” Ivey said, “and as we stand up and show that this is really important so we can put this pandemic to rest, everyone needs to be accountable to getting the shot.”

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VACCINE QUEST (from pg. 1)

wasn't going to be as simple as pointing and clicking. The next few days were like a speakeasy situation, where everyone was scrambling to find hidden information – and links that might somehow propel one into an appointment.

LeMay said one of his friends in South Boston ended up finding two appointments in Pittsfield, which is in western Massachusetts, and they decided to make a vacation out of it.

“They found an appointment for two in Pittsfield decided to go,” he said. “They’re driving out there and back, getting a hotel and getting vaccinated. People have gone to great lengths to do this. That’s the most drastic thing I saw happen.”

LeMay and several of the South End Seniors seemed to hit a break when members Bizzy McCabe and Paul Wright stumbled upon a link that suddenly seemed to have local appoint-

ments available.

“Early on I got that link and kept using that link all the time,” said LeMay. “On the next day – the 28th – I was able to get an appointment. There were 85 appointments and I helped some friends of mine in my book club and other friends in the South End.”

Never before had a link become so important to so many.

State Sen. Will Brownsberger, who held a Zoom call with seniors in his district late last week, said the state was responsible for the rollout and he felt it was done very poorly.

“Clearly it did not go well,” he said. “The information available to people needing vaccination is poor. It’s very poor in a couple of major ways...What I heard from people is a lot of people wanted to get vaccinated and couldn’t, number one. And a lot of people were angry that the website wasted so much of their time.”

He said he is advocating for the state to bring in outside resources to design a site that works and isn’t as confusing as the one rolled out over the last few days. He said that will be critical as the state begins to offer vaccinations to more and more sectors of the public.

LeMay said he agrees the state could do better.

He said he likes Gov. Charlie Baker a lot, and knows him personally, but is disappointed in this effort to get seniors vaccinated.

“I just think they probably should not have set a date until they were really ready to roll this out,” he said.

Brownsberger is worried also about the expectations set out by the state, simply saying to make an appointment and get the shot. Meanwhile, he said, if one looks closely there are 1.2 million seniors to be vaccinated and only about 100,000 doses now.

“One million will need to get vaccinated in the next few months and there’s only doses for about 80,000 per week,” he said. “Do the math and that’s three months or maybe more when the federal government and manufacturers are able to make more available. Most seniors are not going to get vaccinated for a while and they will have to be patient.”

Patience, however, is very hard to come by when one has been waiting for months inside to potentially regain some freedom of movement.

LeMay said it was very, very important to him to get vaccinated. He has been self-quarantining since March 28, and he does go out for walks, but is very selective as to what he does. He is 78 and very worried about catching COVID. The light at the end of the tunnel seemed to be the vaccine, so when it was available, he was ready.

“It’s a feeling of being more

secure,” he said. “I’m a little bit on my own and I don’t want to end up in a hospital or being a burden on someone.”

He relayed a story about when his brother passed away during the pandemic. He had to travel on a plane to get to see him, be by his bedside for his last days and then attend the funeral. On the way back, he said, it was very stressful because there were so many people crammed together and it didn’t feel like a safe situation.

“I really was in fear all the way back,” he said. “I want to be able to take a flight in those times of family emergencies and I don’t need to travel for enjoyment or vacations.”

LeMay was able to get an appointment this week to get vaccinated in Boston this week, though he said he will still be careful, wear a mask and social-distance even after the vaccination kicks in.

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# Equity applicant proposes retail cannabis store for 331 Newbury St.

By Dan Murphy

An equity applicant is now proposing a retail cannabis dispensary for 331 Newbury St. in a location that the city approved as a medical marijuana establishment more than three years ago.

The primary owners of the Rooted in Roxbury, who outlined their plan during this month's meeting of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay Licensing and Building Use Committee, which was held virtually on Feb. 1, include Solomon and Rokeya Chowdhury, the proprietors of Shanti Restaurant, with locations in Dorchester, Roslindale and Kendall Square in Cambridge, and the Dudley Café in Roxbury, along with lifelong Boston residents, Brian and Joanne Keith.

(Besides the proposed Back Bay outpost, Rooted in Roxbury has another location in Roxbury, which was unanimously approved by the state's Cannabis Control Commission in November, but has yet to open.)

The Newbury Street store would occupy around 1,535 square feet of ground-floor retail space, said Brian Keith, and its proposed hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week, with reduced hours on Sundays. All sales would be by appointment only upon opening, he added, "until we understand peak demand."

Rooted in Roxbury on Newbury Street would be a high-end establishment, Ben Keith said, which he likened to a "boutique wine store" as opposed to a "corner liquor store," with minimal signage. The owners also pledge that the establishment won't sell single "joints."

"It's not something we want to see," said Ben Keith to committee members regarding the potential sale of single-rolls at the Back Bay location. "We want to work with you on this."

Rooted in Roxbury has also hired Ware Security, a Roxbury security company

owned by people of color, he said, and all patrons at the Back Bay location would have their IDs scanned in the sales vestibule twice to ensue they are 21 or older before they are allowed inside the sales area.

All deliveries would also be made to the rear alley in an effort to mitigate the impact, said Ben Keith, and any would-be patrons seen double-parking in front of the establishment would automatically have their orders cancelled.

Investors would be able to buy into Rooted in Roxbury for as little as \$1,200 a share, according to the owners, and, to date, they have included 100 percent people of color, 51 percent women and 100-percent Boston residents.

"Our investors are our neighbors," Ben Keith said, "and we welcome new ones from Back Bay to share in the success of this location."

In November of 2017, Compassionate Organics won

the approval of the city's Zoning Board of Appeals to open a medical dispensary at 331 Newbury St. and partnered with Green Thumb Industries (GTI) the following year. GTI, which has continued to pay rent at the location, would have a 9.9 percent share in the Rooted in Roxbury's Back Bay store only, said Ben Keith, "to help them recoup their losses."

Besides allocating 3 percent of sales to a "dedicated city fund," Rooted in Roxbury would also establish a "separate Community Benefits Fund," Ben Keith added, with 5 percent of the equity "set aside for employees." (The Back Bay location is expected to create 30 new jobs, he said.)

Elliott Laffer, who serves as chair of NABB's board of directors, expressed concern that other nearby cannabis retail dispensaries had already received approval to open, including Cypress Tree Management in the current location

of Little Steve's Pizzeria at 1114 Boylston St. in the Fenway, as well as SIRA, which plans to open blocks away on Boylston Street, while Ember Gardens is now awaiting approval on 297 Newbury St. But these approvals have come despite the city's mandate that two such establishments couldn't be located within a half-mile of each other.

"It's the challenge we face in the way it was set up and to have that half-mile [buffer] mean something," Laffer said.

Joyce, a public relations consultant for the applicant who previously served as the city's press secretary under former Mayor Thomas M. Menino, responded, "We can't comment on the city's process, but we're aligned in that we wouldn't want any more dispensaries in Newbury Street either."

Meanwhile, Rooted in Roxbury has yet to schedule a hearing date with the ZBA in regard to its proposed Back Bay location, said Joyce, but it would follow an abutters' meeting.

## COMMISSIONER GROSS (from pg. 1)

included with him and no one was left out. He asked questions and listened to your answers. He didn't just move on and not listen. He wouldn't ask you to do anything that he wouldn't do himself...I haven't been around for all Commissioners, but I haven't seen a Commissioner that knew his or her Department the way Willie did."

Paul Mahoney, who served as a deputy superintendent under Gross and has since retired, said he first began working alongside Gross while stationed in Dorchester. He said he worked on one side of that neighborhood, and Gross worked on the other side. They often ran across each other on the beat, and he said Gross always made an impression.

As they went up the ranks, he and Gross grew closer and eventually Gross promoted him to deputy.

"Willie's style is absolutely unique in policing," he said.

"I have worked under a lot of great police executives, but I don't think they took the time to

get to know the community level cops and the community groups the way he did," he continued.

Long-time BPD officer Cecil Jones said it was the personal interest that Gross took in officers, and his willingness to listen first that made his so popular amongst the rank and file.

He said he retired from the Department last month, and on his last day, Gross called him into his office for a chat. It ended up being a two-hour casual talk about life and policing, and Gross even cancelled an appearance to spend more time with Jones.

Jones – who does a lot of work for charity inside the Department – said Gross always listened to his ideas.

"He is and always was just very real," he said. "That's the best way to describe him – real."

Mahoney and Jones shared that during tragic situations involving other officers and their families, Gross would often show up at the door for support. He didn't have to be there, but he

wanted to be there, they said.

"He was the Commissioner, but he was a wonderful person and very caring," said Mahoney. "In our line of work, people don't understand there are caring people out there. No matter what race, creed or neighborhood, he was the same to everyone...It is no act with him. The kindness and caring and compassion is something that he can't turn off."

On Friday, in his last act on the Department, Gross addressed all officers and staff on the Police Radio to sign off. After vigorous 'thank yous' Gross said – nearly in tears – that the Boston Police would continue responding to calls no matter what happens.

"You are the ones that answer the call each and every day – sworn and civilian," he said. "Never ever forget your self-worth. And if the haters are listening, so be it. We're still going to answer these calls each and every day. Our first responder family. Boston Police, Fire and EMS. The nation began here."



Police Commissioner Gross - Signing Off  
Commissioner Willie Gross signing off on the Police Radio last Friday night in his last day on the job. Gross abruptly retired on Thursday and his tenure and time on the job drew praise from many law enforcement officers who served with and under him.

Don't forget it...I love and appreciate you all. Thank you. Yankee C-1 Oceanfront."

Mayor Martin Walsh also thanked the Commissioner for his service, being the mayor that appointed him – and in the process – appointed the first African American police commissioner in Boston.

"I want to thank Commissioner Gross from the bottom of my heart for his 37 years of service to the Boston Police Department and for his two and a half years

leading the department as Commissioner," he said. "Throughout his decorated career, he's always embodied the spirit of community policing that is so important to building trust with the people we serve. Anyone who knows Willie can instantly feel his love for the job and his passion for keeping communities safe. No matter the situation, his warm smile, dedication, and love for meeting people made him uniquely capable of taking on the toughest challenges."

# Dennis White sworn in as Boston's new police commissioner

By Lauren Bennett

Mayor Marty Walsh swore in Boston's 43rd police commissioner, Dennis White, on Monday morning, following former Commissioner William Gross' retirement on January 29.

At the swearing-in, Walsh thanked Gross for his "leadership and his 37 years of service" in the Boston Police Department (BPD). Gross became police commissioner in 2018.

"He led the department with passion and purpose," Walsh said of Gross. "He embodied a strong spirit of community policing. He made our neighborhoods safer and he took Boston's national leadership to a whole new level."

Walsh acknowledged Gross' leadership and work throughout "monumental change" and working with the city to create the "most ambitious set of police reforms in BPD's history," said that Gross "leaves behind certainly an inspiring legacy, whether it was making history as Boston's first Black commissioner, appointing the most diverse command staff in this department's history, reducing crime, getting guns off the street, creating the first ever Bureau of Community Engagement, or serving as a role model for our men and women in other offices..."

Walsh said that Gross' com-

mitment to the community was evident throughout his time as police commissioner, and told Gross that he and the City of Boston "hope you enjoy a well deserved retirement. Thank you for everything that you've done."

Dennis White, who is Boston's second Black police commissioner, began his time with the department as a patrol officer in D6 in South Boston, Walsh said, and then became D2 sergeant patrol supervisor and a sergeant detective in D4 in the South End and Internal Affairs, Walsh said.

"Before he joined the command staff in 2014, he was a lieutenant and duty supervisor in District 2 in Roxbury, District 3 in Mattapan, [and] District 13 in Jamaica Plain," Walsh said. "He served as Deputy Superintendent in the Office of Superintendent and Chief in the Bureau of Field Services Night Command. He was promoted then to chief of staff...to the rank of superintendent."

White is also a member of the Boston Police Reform Task Force. He has served with the BPD for 32 years.

"I am confident he will continue the Boston Police Department's reputation as a leader in community policing, and advance the department's commitment to accountability and transparency and help lead the Boston Police Department into a

new era."

After he took the oath of office and was pinned by his wife Jackie, White said in his remarks that he is "humbled and honored to be appointed." He said he will "forever appreciate" Walsh's friendship as the mayor most likely heads off to Washington, D.C., soon.

"I wish you nothing but the best, Mayor," White said.

White also addressed Commissioner Gross, wishing him "the best in your next chapter."

He also provided an anecdote about his mother.

"Today, I am fulfilling a dream of my mother that she saw for me," White said. He said that during his swearing-in ceremony as deputy superintendent in 2014, his mother, who was ill with lung cancer, attended the ceremony in a wheelchair and with an oxygen tank.

"She pinned my badge to me," White said, and then his mother said, "God can take me now."

Claiming he was his mother's favorite child, he said that her hopes for him were to meet President Barack Obama, which he did in 2015, and to become Boston's police commissioner.

White said he was grateful for the love and support of his family. "It's been a long and sometimes difficult road," he said. "I truly love you all."

He also said that the "BPD has

been tested this past year. The COVID pandemic has strained our resources with our officers working long hours in difficult situations. Still, the BPD has answered all calls to service without hesitation to our citizens."

White told residents that he will work to bring communities together during this difficult time.

"I will continue to prioritize health and wellness efforts for our sworn and civilian officers. To the residents of Boston, many relationships between the police and the communities they serve have been strained due to COVID and the national reckoning on racial justice. As commissioner, the BPD will continue to priori-

tize community engagement to build trust and relationships with our citizens and community."

He continued, "We will get through this together, but we will have to make changes," adding that he will ensure all recommended made by the Boston Police Reform Task Force are implemented.

"I know this will not be easy, but I am confident that the BPD will get the job done," White said. "I look forward to working closely with the members of the department, the communities, and all our partners to continue to make the BPD the best department in the country."

## Stakeholders urge BFD to make hiring quotas from cadet program a mandate

By Dan Murphy

While stakeholders are optimistic about the Boston Fire Department's new cadet program, which aims to create more diversity within its ranks, they're imploring the city to make a quota for hires from this pool a mandate.

"There's a difference between a benchmark and a mandate when it comes to meeting goals," said Rep. Chynah Tyler, who filed the bill at the State House that authorized forming the cadet program, during a virtual meeting on Jan. 25 sponsored by Lawyers for Civil Rights. "Having a benchmark is unacceptable - we want to have a mandate to make sure that the 33 percent is met."

Gov. Charlie Baker signed the legislation into law last month, which creates a two-year cadet program for would-be firefighters, ages 18 to 25, who are appointed by the fire chief, and have been living in the city for at least five years and attended Boston Public Schools. The legislation would also cap the appointments of new cadets to one-third for each of the Fire Department's two incoming classes of around 50 every year.

"This should be a mandate, and we should be pushing to get this done," said City Councilor Andrea Campbell, who introduced the hearing order on the matter that paved the way for the home-rule petition Mayor Martin Walsh introduced last year. "These are high-paying jobs."

Councilor Campbell described the BFD, which is reportedly more than 72 percent white and more than 94 percent male, as "the least diverse of any of our city agencies."

Darrell Higginbottom, president of the Boston Society of Vulcans, a nonprofit comprising Boston firefighters of color, as well as a 22-year veteran of the BFD, said, "It's very important that the community is there throughout the whole process."

Attorney Sophia Hall of Lawyers for Civil Rights urged the city to give the Vulcans themselves an active role in helping to roll out the cadets program.

"The Vulcans have been committed to this issue for more than a decade," Hall said, "so it's imperative that they have a seat at the table."

## Nearly 2,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine 'compromised' at Jamaica Plain VA hospital

By Lauren Bennett

Nearly 2,000 doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine went bad on January 19 after a freezer at the Jamaica Plain VA Medical Center came unplugged, according to a spokesperson for the VA Boston Healthcare system.

"The freezer was in a secure location and had an alarm system installed," the spokesperson said in a statement to the JP Gazette.

"The plug was found loose after a contractor accidentally removed it while cleaning. An investigation is underway to determine the cause of the incident and why the monitoring and alarm system did not work as expected."

The spokesperson said that 1900 doses of the vaccine are

no longer viable, but "replenishment doses are in process and we do not foresee disruption of our vaccination effort."

Vaccinations began last week at rest homes and assisted living facilities in the JP area, including the Mount Pleasant Home and the Goddard House, as part of the state's phased vaccination plan.

City Councilor At-Large and mayoral candidate Michelle Wu told reporters at a press conference on January 29 that "the most urgent step" is to "end the pandemic by getting residents this protection of the vaccine."

Wu has recently called for a vaccination clinic in every zip code in Boston to ensure equitable access to the vaccine, as well as for some to provide the vaccine at varying hours to accommodate all.

She also said that "building trust with communities, particularly our most impacted communities," is imperative, and "trust requires transparency with planning."

Wu said that Boston and the federal government need to directly reach out to and communicate with residents regarding the vaccine.

"The vaccine spoilage issue is a logistical one," she said, adding that the logistical issues are ones that need to be "front and center" as vaccine distribution locations need to be able to store doses of the vaccine safely and for an appropriate amount of time so none are wasted.

"That all needs to be planned out right now," she said, "not at the point where people are coming to receive the vaccine."

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# ATTENTION TO DETAIL

BY PENNY CHERUBINO

## THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The stairway in the last clue can be found at 84 Pembroke Street. This is the Boston House of Sufism. On their Facebook page, the group wrote that it was, "... organized and opened in 1978 in a beautiful South End brownstone that was built before the American Civil War." Thank you to the reader who suggested this address. 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



# State Rep. Tyler presents the fourth Annual Black Restaurant Challenge

Staff report

The Boston Black Restaurant Challenge is a month-long event, challenging Boston residents to order takeout or delivery at one Black Owned Restaurant per week in Boston in honor of Black History Month.

"Unfortunately, wealth in Massachusetts is unequally distributed by race – Black families' wealth in the Commonwealth is a fraction in comparison to most other families from different races. This leaves them more

economically vulnerable and with far fewer opportunities for economic mobility," said Rep. Tyler. "As the Chair of the Massachusetts Black & Latino Legislative Caucus and as a State Representative, my mission is to use my platform to promote the economic development and growth of Black owned businesses and communities here in Boston and across Massachusetts."

Please join Rep. Tyler for the Boston Black Restaurant Challenge virtual series. Each week a

video will be posted in partnership with various Black-owned restaurants and businesses in Boston. The virtual series will feature founding sponsors such as the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA) and community leaders of Boston. The kickoff will feature the release of a short video released on Facebook and Instagram of Rep. Tyler at *Cafe Juice Up*, the first featured restaurant of the challenge. #BostonBlackRestaurantChallenge

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78 Mount Vernon NT  
Blumenthal, Gary B

126 Bowdoin St St RT  
Victoria J Dodd T  
Marjorie A Rushton RET  
Pumroy-Meaders, Phyliss  
Hayward, Scott L  
Arnold, Jeffrey B

126 Bowdoin St  
234 Causeway St #710  
9 Hancock St #4  
70-72 Mount Vernon St #GB27  
78 Mount Vernon St  
200 Saint Botolph St #1

\$350,000  
\$840,000  
\$732,000  
\$1,880,000  
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50 Symphony LLC  
Whitcomb, Andrea J  
Quagliaroli, James J  
Mcdermott, Julie M  
Jewel Wa Street LLC

90 Broadway #2D  
26 Holyoke St  
208 W Canton St #1  
216 W Canton St #5  
15 Warren Ave #6  
17 Aberdeen St #B  
21 Claremont Park  
9 Concord Sq #G  
35 Fay St #106  
735 Harrison Ave #W202  
15 Keswick St #1  
50 Symphony Rd #104  
50 Symphony Rd #302  
50 Symphony Rd #304  
50 Symphony Rd #403  
50 Symphony Rd #503  
597 Tremont St #1  
155 W Brookline St  
79 Waltham St #4  
1180-1200 Washington St #423

\$750,000  
\$6,750,000  
\$1,850,000  
\$880,000  
\$1,175,000  
\$255,000  
\$5,100,000  
\$670,000  
\$850,000  
\$315,725  
\$380,000  
\$1,225,000  
\$1,025,000  
\$1,325,000  
\$1,375,000  
\$1,449,000  
\$599,000  
\$3,475,000  
\$819,500  
\$1,100,000

### WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN

Otey, Brady P  
Harback, Peter  
Dunn, Eric M  
Waheedi, Salma M  
Corbacho, Marc A  
Riahi, Sepand J  
Zhu, Shuhao

Cutler, Robert J  
Guthrie, Andrew D  
Hershey-Galvin, Laura  
Zack, Barbara  
340 Lewis Wharf NT  
Aurelia J Papiotto T  
Abuissa, Jamal A

343 Commercial St #204  
11 Foster St #1  
57 Fulton St #10  
88 Kingston St #6C  
340 Lewis Wharf #340  
580 Washington St #11C  
580 Washington St #14E

\$2,030,000  
\$345,000  
\$1,125,000  
\$680,000  
\$1,100,000  
\$1,525,000  
\$1,230,000

# Carjacking plays out in front of Boston Medical Center

About 1:16 a.m. on Saturday, January 30, officers assigned to District D-4 (South End) responded to a radio call for a Carjacking in the area of 658 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston.

Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated that while on Dorchester Avenue he was approached by a male, later identified as Jeffrey Haslett, 36 years old of Quincy, who asked the victim for a ride to the area of Boston Medical Center. As they arrived near Boston Medical Center, Haslett became very violent and struck the victim in the back of the head with what appeared to be a firearm. The victim stated that he was in fear for his life, so he exited his vehicle. Haslett then climbed over to the driver's seat and drove off towards

Washington Street.

Officers broadcast a description of the suspect and the victims motor vehicle. An officer from District B-2 (Roxbury) was on patrol in the area, and spotted the vehicle at the intersection of Hampden Street and Melnea Cass Boulevard. The officer observed the vehicle turn onto Hampden Street and accelerate towards the area of George Street. The officer activated his emergency lights and sirens, in an attempt to conduct a traffic stop. The suspect refused to stop, and continued traveling on Shirley Street to Dudley Street until turning onto Wendover Street, where he was forced to stop at a dead end.

Haslett exited the motor vehicle with his left hand up in the air and his right hand down by his

leg, holding what appeared to be a firearm. Officers ordered Haslett to drop the weapon, to which he complied, and placed the firearm on the ground. The officers retrieved the firearm and placed Haslett under arrest.

Further investigation determined the firearm to be a BB Gun.

After a positive identification, Jeffrey Haslett was charged with Carjacking, Assault and Battery by Means of a Dangerous Weapon (BB Gun), Speeding, Operating a Motor Vehicle After Suspended License, Failure to Stop for Police Officer, Stop Sign Violation and Reckless Operation. Haslett was also issued a MA Uniform Citation.

Jeffrey Haslett is expected to be arraigned in Roxbury District Court.



## 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.

**JoinAllOfUs.org/NewEngland**  
**(617) 768-8300**

\*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.

All of Us and the All of Us logo are service marks of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**All of Us**  
**New England**

BRIGHAM HEALTH  
BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL  
MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL

BOSTON  
MEDICAL

FIND US ONLINE AT [WWW.THEBOSTONSUN.COM](http://WWW.THEBOSTONSUN.COM)

## 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 Feb. 3 License Board hearing, 1 p.m., online via WebEx (HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/82041492311?):**  
•ALGONQUIN CLUB OF BOSTON: D/B/A: ALGONQUIN CLUB; 217 COMMONWEALTH Ave., Back Bay. Holder of a Club All-Alcoholic Beverages License has petitioned to change the d/b/a of the licensed business-From: Algonquin Club To: The 'Quin House. Secondly, has petitioned to change the manager of the licensed business-From: Norman B. Hall To: Sumeet Jhingan.

•79 PARK PLAZA, LLC. D/B/A: THE OYSTER CLUB, 91 PARK PZ, Back Bay. Holder of a Common Victualler 7 Day All-Alcoholic Beverages License has petitioned to transfer the license from the above - To: TDC Heritage Holdings LLC. (at the same location). Closing hour 2 a.m.

•UNO RESTAURANTS, LLC. D/B/A: UNO CHICAGO GRILL, 731 BOYLSTON St. Back Bay. Holder of a Common Victualler 7 Day All-Alcoholic Beverages License has petitioned to transfer the license and the location from the above - To: Kojam, LLC. 276 278 Newbury St., Back Bay. In 4 rooms on first floor consisting of 4 dining areas and bar with seating for 103, containing approximately 3,285 SF. In two rooms on lower level consisting of wine bar with seating for 25, kitchen and restrooms containing approximately 2,603 SF. 2 season outdoor patios (March-November) on private property, each seating for 20. Kenneth Oringer, Manager. Closing hour 1 a.m.

**From the Feb. 4 Community Preservation Committee meeting, 5:30 p.m., online:**  
•Discussion of FY21 Affordable Housing, Historic Preservation, Open Space and Recreation Applications.

**From the Feb. 5, 9 a.m., CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS:** Order for a hearing to discuss property taxes and assistance

programs for seniors & long-term residents facing difficulties during COVID-19.

This matter was sponsored by Councilor Ed Flynn and was referred to the Committee on January 13, 2021.

**From the Feb. 6 School Committee meeting, 10 a.m., online:**

•The Boston School Committee will hold a remote community listening session on priority setting: goals and guardrails

**From the Feb. 9, 1 p.m., CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH HEARING:** Order for a hearing regarding COVID-19 vaccines. This matter was sponsored by Councilors Andrea Campbell and Ricardo Arroyo, and was referred to the Committee on February 9, 2021.

**From the Feb. 9 Bay Village Historic District Commission meeting, 4 p.m., via Zoom (HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/89984135666):**

**DESIGN REVIEW**  
•119 Berkeley Street: Create an accessible entry by modifying an existing window opening at Cortes Street, creating an opening in the existing fence, and installing a paved pathway.

**ADVISORY REVIEW**  
•19 Isabella Street: Conversion of former Our Lady of Victories Church into residential condominiums.

**From the Feb. 9 Boston Landmarks Commission meeting, 6 p.m., online via WebEx (HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/81932218424):**

•Discussion and vote on BLC's recommendation for the approval of the City of Boston through the City Council and Mayor of a preservation restriction agreement pursuant to state law on the Howell Matson House, 41 Melrose Street (Bay Village) to be held by Historic New England.

**From the BPDA 140 Clarendon St. (Back Bay) Public meeting: Feb. 9, 6 p.m.**

•Follow-up to Impact Advisory Group/Public Meeting of January 13.

•Review of project considerations for the proposed 140 Clarendon Street project. Please register in advance for this meeting: [bit.ly/3adZsk8](http://bit.ly/3adZsk8)

**From the Feb. 10 Back Bay Architectural**

**Commission, 5 p.m., via WebEx (HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/87031466961):**

**DESIGN REVIEW - 5 PM**

•535 Boylston Street: Replacement of existing signage, installation of window graphics, and installation of green metal cladding at entry corner.

•276-278 Newbury Street: Work: At front facade redesign previously approved dig out areas into one terrace dining space; and at rear elevation install signage and ventilation equipment.

•227 Newbury Street: At rear elevation regrade rear yard area from alley sidewalk to rear elevation, install ramp, and convert existing window into entry door.

•48 Gloucester Street: At front facade recoat concrete bollard; and at side elevation relocate unapproved exhaust and intake vents.

•299-301 Newbury Street: Combination of both parcels into single parcel. Re-point masonry, replace windows in-kind, replace copper gutters and downspouts in-kind; at front façade enlarge lower level and first story front windows, create accessible at grade entrance at 299 Newbury Street, and redesign front garden to create patio and entry to lower level with copper canopy; at roof install deck and penthouse; and at rear elevation construct addition with roof deck, install rear balcony, install deck on top of rear bay, alter rear window openings for doors, and install brick pavers at rear yard area.

•452 Newbury Street: Replace existing light pole with DAS node. Light pole to match style of existing light pole with additional base cabinet and top mounted antenna.

•Charlesgate East: Installation of multi-space electronic parking meter pay station at existing grass strip area between street and sidewalk.

•12 Hereford Street: Work: Install electrical wiring at rear elevation from first story to chimney exhaust fan.

•322 Marlborough Street: At roof install sound barrier at existing HVAC unit.

•433 Marlborough Street: Repair and restore masonry, repair and restore entry stoop, install fire connection and alarm beacon, and repair metal railings.

•302 Beacon Street: At roof replace existing deck with expanded deck, replace existing headhouse, add screen fencing, add green roof trays, add synthetic turf, modify and add railings, and cover existing skylight

with pedestrian rated glass.

•315 Commonwealth Avenue: Work: Restore masonry at front facade and rear elevation; at rear elevation replace existing fire escapes with balconies, add additional balcony, alter fenestration at lower level, create garden and construct garden walls; and at roof add deck, mechanical equipment and redesign existing rooftop structures.

**From the Feb. 11 Community Preservation Committee meeting, 5:30 p.m., online:**

•Public Comments  
•Final vote on full slate of FY21 CPA Applications

**From the Feb. 22 BPDA meeting on The Aubrey, 149-155 Newbury St., 6 p.m.:**

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Small Project Review Application that was filed. The meeting will include a presentation by the Proponent followed by Q&A and comments. The proposed project consists of the redevelopment of a surface parking lot at 149 Newbury Street in the Back Bay neighborhood of Boston. The proposed project will eliminate the 66-space parking lot and construct a five-story building totaling approximately 43,500 gross square feet (sf) including approx. 17,500 sf of retail space and approx. 26,000 sf of office space. Register in advance for this webinar: [www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_M-ECdEINRneICA\\_-YgzeRA](http://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_M-ECdEINRneICA_-YgzeRA)

### SCHOOLS INFO

•School Return Timetables - Thursday, Feb. 4 - Students with high in-person priority; March 1-4 - Students in K0-Grade 3 (Groups A and B); March 15-18 - Students in Grades 4-8 (Groups A & B); and March 29-April 1 - Students in grades 9-12 (Groups A & B).

•BPS Priority Registration - Priority registration for school year 2021-22 began on Jan. 5 for students entering grades K0, K1, 6th, 7th and 9th grades. Priority Registration for those grades ends on Jan. 29. Assignment notifications are on March 31. Students entering K2 and all other grades have priority registration on Feb. 8 and ends on April 5. Assignment notifications for those grades is on May 28. There are informational Zoom sessions about registration on Weds. Jan 20, 4 p.m.; and Sat., Feb. 27, at 10 a.m. BPS Welcome Centers are temporarily closed to the public, but

registration can be done online and via phone. Call (617) 635-9010 to schedule a phone appointment with a specialist.

•P-EBT Cards - All BPS students will have more P-EBT funds for this school year. If you received P-EBT funds in the past, look for funds to be allocated the last week of December. New to P-EBT? You will get a P-EBT card in January or check your existing EBT card for funds. Learn more at [www.MAP-EBT.org](http://www.MAP-EBT.org) or call the Assistance Line at 877-382-2363.

### 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 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.



# WATERSIDE BEACON

**128 BEACON STREET #A**  
**3 BEDS | 3.5 BATHS | 4,112 SQFT**  
**\$6,450,000**



**20 LOUISBURG SQUARE**  
**6 BEDS | 6F 2H BATHS | 7,610 SQFT**  
**\$16,000,000**



**608 EAST 8TH STREET #1**  
**3 BEDS | 2.5 BATHS | 2,185 SQFT**  
**\$1,225,000**



**20 ROWES WHARF #707**  
**2 BEDS | 2 BATHS | 1,188 SQFT**  
**\$1,899,000**



**80 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE #PH**  
**4 BEDS | 3F 2H BATHS | 3,351 SQFT**  
**\$5,999,000**

