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SERVING BACK BAY - SOUTH END - FENWAY - KENMORE

Design options unveiled for Back Bay Fens pathways

By Dan Murphy

Several new design options were unveiled during the city's third meeting on proposed improvements to the Back Bay Fens pathways, which was held virtually on Thursday, Feb. 16.

Construction is tentatively expected to get underway on the project this fall, said Lauren Bryant, project manager for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. The cost of the project, which was originally intended to focus on just the pathways themselves, was then

estimated to be around \$6.3 million, she said, but its scope has since been expanded to include three additional items: the War Memorial, along with its paths and accessibility; the John Boyle O'Reilly Memorial; and the new Evans Way Bridge.

Kyle Zick, a landscape architect for the project, said the city controls most of the land and pathways within the project site. The War Memorial and its pathways are under the jurisdiction of the Boston Trust Office, he said,

(BACK BAY FENS Pg. 6)



COURTESY OF THE BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Back Bay Fens pathways.



COURTESY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

A car-free section of Dartmouth Street between St. James Avenue and Boylston Street is seen last June during the city's Copley Connect pilot.

Proposed closing of portion of Dartmouth Street raises questions and concerns

By Dan Murphy

With the city authorizing further study on the permanent closure of a section of Dartmouth Street near the Copley Branch of the Boston Public Library to vehicular traffic, the question remains about what this would

ultimately mean for the future of traffic in the neighborhood.

Between June 7 and 17 of last year, the Boston Planning & Development Agency and the Boston Transportation Department engaged in their Copley Connect pilot, which shut down access of Dartmouth Street

between Boylston Street and St. James Avenue to motor vehicles to create expanded pedestrian space.

"For the first time, Copley Connect unified two of Boston's most iconic civic

(DARTMOUTH STREET Pg. 4)

Santiago named state's first-ever secretary of Veterans' Affairs

By Dan Murphy

Gov. Maura Healey announced Rep. Dr. Jon Santiago as the state's first-ever Secretary of the Executive Office of Veterans' Services on Friday, Feb. 17, which will trigger a special election to fill his current seat.

Rep. Santiago, age 40, of the South End, was elected state representative for the city's 9th Suffolk District in 2018. During his time in the Legislature, he also worked as an emergency medicine physician at Boston Medical Center, doubling his hours there in the wake of the pandemic.

He also served as a member of the House of Representatives COVID-19 Working Group and Vice-Chair of the COVID-19 and Emergency Preparedness & Management during this time. Rep. Santiago, who launched an

(SANTIAGO Pg. 3)

EDITORIAL

JIMMY CARTER: A WONDERFUL, AMAZING MAN

The reports that former President Jimmy Carter has returned home for hospice care came as sad news for all Americans this week.

Ever since the self-described peanut farmer burst onto the national scene shortly after he was elected governor of Georgia, it is not an overstatement to say that Jimmy Carter served as the conscience of America for the past half century.

Jimmy Carter served four years as president from 1977-81. But that term of office was just a small mark left by this wonderful man during his decades of service to our country and the world.

He became the face of Habitat for Humanity, the organization that builds housing for low-income persons. He served as an official who oversaw numerous elections in foreign countries to ensure that they were run honestly and above-board. He also undertook a campaign to eradicate the Guinea worm, a human parasitic infection that plagued 3.5 million people across the globe annually 40 years ago, but thanks to the efforts of the Jimmy Carter Center, there were just 13 reported cases world-wide in 2022.

For his many years of service to the world, Carter was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 “for his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development.”

It is fair to say that no former American president had as great an impact on the world after he left office than Jimmy Carter -- it’s not even close.

But the most remarkable aspect of Jimmy Carter’s life has been his incredible humility, which no doubt was informed by his faith as a Christian minister in his small hometown church in Plains, Georgia, where he gave a sermon every Sunday.

It often is a cliché to say that someone will be missed. But in the case of our former President, Jimmy Carter, a man who spoke the truth -- even if America did not want to hear it (such as when he said in 1979 that America must end its dependence on fossil fuels) -- his absence truly will be a great loss for all of us.

OUR SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE MUST NOT WAVER: WE MUST REMAIN THE ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY

This week marks the first anniversary of the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by the government of Russia and its sociopathic leader, Vladimir Putin.

The Ukrainian people have demonstrated to the world that freedom isn’t free. The enormous sacrifices they are making in order to fight off the Russian war machine have served as an inspiration to freedom-loving peoples around the world.

Russian atrocities against Ukrainian civilians -- the rapes, executions, forced deportation of children, and the attacks on civilian infrastructure -- have risen to the level of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Those in our country who question our commitment to help the Ukrainians resist the Russian invaders suffer from a combination of being incredibly naive, selfish, and shortsighted.

The Ukrainians, not Americans or anyone else, are the ones on the front lines. They are making the ultimate sacrifices in defense of both their country and the free world. Our allies in Europe, especially in Poland and the Baltic countries of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, know all too well that Russia, if left unchecked in Ukraine, will focus on them and that they will be next in line to feel the weight of the Russian oppressors, who will seek to undermine their democratic governments.

Vladimir Putin has gone on record as lamenting the dissolution of the former Soviet Union empire, for which he served as a KGB agent, and his invasion of Ukraine, in his eyes, is the first step in restoring the U.S.S.R. to what he perceives as its former glory.

We would note that the war in Ukraine is fundamentally different from that of every other conflict since WWII. This is the first time that an independent, democratic nation has been invaded by a foreign power since Hitler invaded European countries in the late 1930s starting with Czechoslovakia, then Poland, and then the rest of Europe.

With England remaining as the lone bulwark against the Nazis, President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave a fireside chat in late 1940 in which he spoke to the American people these words.

“The people of Europe who are defending themselves do not ask us to do their fighting. They ask us for the implements of war, the planes, the tanks, the guns, the freighters which will enable them to fight for their liberty and for our security. Emphatically, we must get these weapons to them, get them to them in sufficient volume and quickly enough so that we and our children will be saved the agony and suffering of war which others have had to endure.”

Later in his talk he coined a phrase that has remained true ever since:

“America must be the great arsenal of democracy.”

President Roosevelt’s words are as true today as they were then. We urge all of our elected leaders to ensure that American support for Ukraine continues to be strong and unquestioned.

GUEST OP-ED

Start solving the vocational admissions problem: Improve access, create more seats

By Steven C. Sharek

It’s no longer a secret that Massachusetts vocational-technical and agricultural high schools are a great option for students of all backgrounds who want to learn a trade and pursue a career. Unfortunately, there simply isn’t enough space in these schools to accommodate the huge demand.

Right now, there are roughly 55,000 students in Chapter 74 state-approved vocational-technical and agricultural programs, with another 6,000 students on wait lists. At the same time, business and industry are crying out for skilled workers.

We can be proud of these schools. They excel in academic performance, graduation rates, and expanded programming that includes fields like environmental science; information technology; and medical, health, and dental assisting. Students excel because they enjoy the engaging, hands-on learning.

We are at a tipping point. With this lack of available seats and strong demand for vocational education, advocates, elected officials, and editorial writers are understandably concerned about whether students are being admitted equitably into our schools. Vocational school leaders are, too.

The current debate is centered on admissions policies and whether the adoption of a lottery system is the silver bullet for fixing any inequities, real or perceived. The reality is that a lottery does nothing to address the lack of capacity and it does not guarantee desired enrollment outcomes.

As educators, we’d like to offer enrollment to everyone. We simply can’t. We don’t have the space. No lottery will ever change that. A lottery will just rearrange who sits in the seats, with 6,000 kids still on the outside looking in. With that in mind, we are working hard to conduct our admissions processes as fairly and equitably as possible:

-Since admissions regulations were

revised by the state in 2021, 97% of vocational-technical and agricultural high schools have made changes in their admissions policies, personnel, or training. Clearly, our schools are serious about this effort.

-Grades are now less of a factor. Many schools now give equal consideration for grades of C or above, unlike before when student grades were more heavily emphasized.

-Disciplinary issues are now less of a factor. Minor disciplinary issues are no longer factored into the admissions process.

-Most schools require a recommendation, typically from a guidance counselor, and a brief interview to gauge a student’s interest in vocational education. We are training interviewers on eliminating bias and are providing supports and accommodations for those applying, including easier access to interviews and translation services.

-The admissions changes only took effect recently so we have limited data to gauge whether the changes we’ve made are making a real difference. One year of data doesn’t make a trend. Moreover, our schools have no access to demographic information about the students who do not enroll. We need help from the state on this so we can make best-informed decisions.

-Finally, there’s no guarantee that a lottery would actually help the protected groups of students that all of us want to help. In fact, simulations run by some of our schools have demonstrated that a lottery would yield exactly the opposite result. That is, a lottery would result in lower numbers of enrolled students in some protected groups (just as one school experimenting with a lottery recently discovered).

Vocational-technical schools are continuously striving to serve under-represented populations. Consider special education. Five of the

(OP-ED Pg. 3)

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USA Today names Esplanade among nation's Top 10 Best Riverwalks for '23

By Sun staff

The Charles River Esplanade finished in eighth place in the category of Best Riverwalk in USA Today's latest 10Best Readers' Choice Travel Awards, according to the Esplanade Association.

Over the course of four weeks, votes were tallied for the 20

nominees in the Best Riverwalk category, which were chosen by an expert panel from the newspaper.

"The Esplanade allows visitors to enjoy the natural, picturesque beauty of the Charles River while being only blocks away from the heart of historic Boston," according to the Esplanade

Association's press release announcing the news. "Visitors can forget the hustle and bustle of the city as they stroll around the lagoons and watch the sailboats along the river. This Boston riverwalk provides opportunities for individuals to engage with the outdoors whether it is a causal walk, playing on the play-

grounds, attending an event, or relaxing with a picnic."

Moreover, the press release reads: "The Esplanade Association (EA) is proud that the Charles River Esplanade was voted among the top 10 riverwalks for the second year. EA is excited to continue the enhancement, revitalization, and maintenance of Boston's iconic riverwalk park. The team looks forward to a year filled with robust programming, outdoor

events, and more. The park will continue to promote outdoor fitness and health with the year-round free fitness series as well as plan for major projects like the Charlesbank Landing building, Pathway Safety and Improvement Plan, Gronk Playground, and much more."

Visit <https://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-riverwalk-2023/> to see USA's list of the country's 10 best riverwalks for '23.

SANTIAGO (from pg. 1)

unsuccessful bid for Mayor of Boston in 2021, is also a major in the U.S. Army Reserves.

"Representative Santiago has dedicated his life to serving his country – whether that's volunteering for the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic, working in the emergency room throughout COVID, being deployed overseas with the U.S. Army Reserve, or advocating for increased access to housing, public transportation and substance use disorder treatment in the State House," said Gov. Healey in a press release. "His public health expertise and military service make him uniquely qualified to serve as Massachusetts' first ever Secretary of Veterans' Services. I'm confident that he will be the leader our veterans need and deserve and will always stand up for their health, safety and wellbeing."

Added Lt. Gov. Kimberly Driscoll. "As the daughter of a Navy veteran, I'm so proud that Massachusetts is taking this critical step to ensure that our veterans are well cared for and prioritized by creating the Executive Office of Veterans' Services. I'm grateful to the veterans, legislators and advocates who worked so hard to see this through – and I'm grateful to Representative Santiago for stepping up to take on this enormous responsibility. I know our veterans will be in good hands under his leadership."



COURTESY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE LEGISLATURE

Rep. Jon Santiago.

ity. I know our veterans will be in good hands under his leadership."

Rep. Santiago said in a press release: "I'm honored that Governor Healey and Lieutenant Governor Driscoll have placed their trust in me to assume this historic position. Our veterans deserve the absolute highest quality of care, but they are far too often underserved. The Healey-Driscoll Administration is committed to meeting the complex needs of those who have bravely served our country, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue my own service as Secretary of Veterans' Services."

One of Santiago's State House colleague, Rep. Jay Livingstone, wished him luck in his new role and commended Gov. Healey on selecting Santiago for the job.

"Governor Healey made a great pick," said Rep. Livingstone. "I'm disappointed that I won't be working anymore with Jon Santiago in the House of Representatives, where he has been a great colleague, I look forward to working with him in his new role."

Rep. Santiago will be sworn in in his new role on March 1, and his duties will include ultimately appointing the heads of the state's two veterans homes, as well as "developing an annual report reviewing the Veterans' Homes' demographics, finances, staffing levels, efficacy, equity, and resident well-being," according to a press release.

Last year, the Massachusetts Legislature made a number of key reforms, including the creation of the state's first cabinet-level Veterans Secretary, in response to the devastating COVID outbreak at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home in 2020 that reportedly killed at least 76 veterans.

Information on a Special Election to fill Rep. Santiago's 9th Suffolk District are expected to be announced soon.

I, Thalwanti Maharaj-Singh, solemnly swear upon oath signed under the pains and penalties of perjury

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OP-ED (from pg. 2)

10 school districts in Massachusetts with the largest percentages of students with disabilities are vocational-technical and agricultural high schools.

While there is strong sentiment on the both sides of the lottery debate, what all advocates of high quality vocational-technical education can agree on is this: The state can do more to help vocational schools and our potential students:

First, the state needs to make a massive capital investment in

vocational school construction to create more seats. Second, our schools need unfettered access to our middle schools so we can inform students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, about the value of vocational education. Put another way, we need better access to reach the very students our detractors say are being excluded.

As demand for limited seats continues, we must work together to create opportunity and

bright futures for all our high school students. Vocational-technical and agricultural high schools in Massachusetts will continue to do their part.

Steven C. Sharek is Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators, a professional association of educational leaders who administer and advocate for high-quality vocational-technical and agricultural education.

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DARTMOUTH STREET *(from pg. 2)*

spaces—Copley Square and the Boston Public Library McKim Building Plaza—into a grand civic space, bookended by Boston Public Library’s McKim Building to the west and H.H. Richardson’s Trinity Church to the east,” according to a BPDA board of directors memo dated Jan. 19 of this year. “This new public space maintained the existing bike lane and featured café seating, food trucks, performances, block parties, outdoor yoga, dance lessons, and programming for library activities.”

At its Jan. 19 monthly hearing, the BPDA board of directors voted to authorize a request for proposals (RFP) to engage a consultant design firm for a one-year term for an amount not to exceed \$100,000 to assist the city in the preparation of the “Copley Connect Design Services planning study.”

The RFP will allow for the hiring of a consultant to build on the pilot program by developing a range of possible design alternatives for future use of the street. BPDA staff is currently refining the language in the RFP, which will be shaped by conversations the city’s Transportation Department is having with stakeholders in the neighborhood.

“The pilot found that the vast majority of those who completed surveys had very positive opinions of Dartmouth Street being made a permanent car-free

space, and a majority of respondents were highly likely to visit more often with such a change,” according to a the BPDA’s Jan. 19 board memo. “An analysis of motor vehicle routes in the area found that travel times during the pilot were generally comparable to pre-pilot travel times. Motor vehicle traffic decreased substantially north of the pilot block on Dartmouth Street, which made for more comfortable walking and biking conditions.”

This matter was among the topics discussed at the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay’s board of directors meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at the French Library, according to Elliott Laffer, chair of the NABB board.

Ted Schwartzberg, a senior planner with the Boston Planning & Development Agency, and Jacob Wessel, the city’s public realm developer, made a presentation on the city initiative.

Also on hand for the meeting were Rep. Jay Livingstone, City Council President Ed Flynn, City Councilor Kenize Bok, and Tiffany Chu, Mayor Michelle Wu’s chief of staff.

“It was an interesting discussion, and there was a lot of unanimous concern expressed by the NABB folks in the room and elected officials on the impact of closing the street,” said Laffer. “We certainly appreciate the city coming to talk to us and

appreciate the elected officials and the representatives of elected officials coming to the meeting. We hope that this increases the understanding of what the severe negative impact of closing that block would have on the traffic network in and around the Back Bay.”

Despite published reports to the contrary, Laffer said city representatives on hand for the meeting maintained that “nothing is baked” concerning the proposed permanent street closure.

“The study is designed to find out what the impacts will be,” he said.

As Laffer sees it, though, the impact of closing Dartmouth Street is already evident.

“The real impact isn’t what happens on Dartmouth Street but what happens to the network,” he said. “Berkeley Street is really the key to the whole thing.”

While on average, the closure wouldn’t have much impact on Berkeley Street traffic, the problem, Laffer believes, is when it does have an impact during times of heavy traffic, the effect would be severe.

“And Berkeley Street gets pretty messed up to begin with,” he added.

There are only five ways to drive from south of Stuart Street and Huntington Avenue to the heart of the Back Bay, said Laffer, including Berkeley Street, which is already “very congested”;

Dartmouth Street, which would be cut off per the plan; Ring Road, a private street that provides very limited access between Huntington Avenue and Boylston Street; the combination of Belvidere and Dalton streets, which is “a very long route around and a very narrow street”; and Massachusetts Avenue, which, he said, is a long way from Dartmouth Street.

“To take out the essential connector, it’s almost inevitable that those who can’t use Dartmouth Street will use Berkeley Street,” said Laffer. “Berkley runs so close to capacity, if anything blocks if off – if a car double-parks, if a repair needs to be made in the road, anything like that – traffic backs up from that point to the South End really quickly because the road is so close to capacity.”

The key intersection at Berkeley and Beacon streets, which carries traffic to Storrow Drive and also from Beacon and Charles streets and the rest of Beacon Hill, would get even more backed up that it already does, Laffer predicts.

“This is a very challenging intersection all the time for cars, bikes, and pedestrians,” he said. “It’s dangerous and frequently congested on a not particularly terrible day from Comm Ave to Beacon, and on a really bad day, for much longer than that. Frustrated people stop in the intersection on Commonwealth Ave and then Comm Ave gets back up is a very frequent occurrence.”

Laffer added: “It’s a very important issue that impacts more than the Back Bay. It will impact anyone who gets off the Turnpike at Copley Square and isn’t going to the South End.”

Still, Laffer said there’s “a lot of acceptance” on finding a more visually appealing connector between Copley Square and the Copley library branch than the existing blacktop.

Moreover, Laffer said it wouldn’t be “unreasonable” for the city to continue temporarily shutting down a portion of Dartmouth Street to accommodate special events on Boylston Street, such as the Boston Marathon or First Night.

But to close Dartmouth Street during regular commuter hours, Laffer said: “Nobody in the Back Bay or anyone else I’ve talked to think that closing the street would be an acceptable outcome.”

Like Laffer, who also pointed out that Copley Connect didn’t

accurately reflect the normal year-round vehicular traffic patterns, since the study was conducted in June, as well as during the pandemic, Meg Mainzer-Cohen, president and executive director of the Back Bay Association, was in agreement on the need for a more comprehensive and protracted traffic study surrounding the initiative.

“We have asked the city about what they plan to study because the most important element...is that they do a deep-dive, Back Bay-wide traffic study of impacts this would have on all 12 months of the year,” said Mainzer-Cohen, who wasn’t on hand for the Feb. 15 NABB board meeting.

Mainzer-Cohen said the study would need to closely consider the fact that every business in the Back Bay needs to receive deliveries of some type.

Additionally, Dartmouth Street, she said, is “the central vein to access Boylston and Newbury streets and the surrounding area.”

If the plan is to permanently close Dartmouth Street between St. James Avenue and Boylston Street, it would effectively put a stranglehold on “the heart of the magnificently planned Back Bay street grid,” she said, by forcing vehicles to go around the circumference of the neighborhood to get through its center.

“People end up going where they don’t want to go to get to where they want to go, and they have to go out of their way to get there in most cases,” Mainzer-Cohen added.


Like Laffer, Mainzer-Cohen agrees that there’s an opportunity to perhaps add some transitional paving between Copley Square and the library, as well as an opportunity to look at the roadway capacity and the possibility of expanding the library plaza over one of the existing traffic lanes.

“We are also open to some short-term closing to accommodate community events,” she added.

Mainzer-Cohen, however, expressed concern “that the city’s promotional materials appear to depict what we hope is an inaccurate portrayal that [a portion of] Dartmouth Street will be permanently closed.”

Rep. Livingstone said he can understand the city’s desire to enhance the area, especially given the Boston Parks and Recreation

(DARTMOUTH STREET Pg. 5)




Virtual Public Meeting

1033-1055 Washington Street

March 8, 2023
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Project Proponent:
The Druker Company, Ltd

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3lqOjPi
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 160 806 3637



Project Description:

The BPDA is hosting a virtual Public Meeting in connection with the PNF for the 1033-1055 Washington Street Project located at 1033-1055 Washington Street in the South End.

The proposed project includes the construction of two life science/office buildings (with an above-grade connection between the buildings) approximately 150 feet in height with an aggregate gross floor area of approximately 588,000 square feet. The Project will include ground-floor retail/restaurant space, community/non-profit space, two levels of below-grade parking, a landscaped pedestrian plaza between the buildings connecting Washington Street and Shawmut Avenue, and related Site improvements and amenities.

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Close of Comment Period:
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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

DARTMOUTH STREET (from pg. 4)

Department's plan to update the design of Copley Square Park and the BPL's plan to rehabilitate the McKim Building, including the Dartmouth Street Plaza.

"I agree that if the city is spending so much money renovating Copley Square and the steps to the Boston Public Library, that the space in between them should be made as beautiful as the other two spaces," he said.

And while Rep. Livingstone said he personally enjoyed the added pedestrian space in the area created via Copley Connect, he doesn't believe that it would adequately justify the permanent closure of that segment of Dartmouth Street.

"I had a great time with my family on Dartmouth Street when it was closed, but the games that my kids played and the activation that they the city did with the space could have been on Copley Square," he said. "I don't see the benefit of closing Dartmouth Street for many months of the year when no one is doing any outdoor activities. Closing Dartmouth Street so people can sit outside, especially in the winter, is not something anyone is going to benefit from."

As a resident of the Back Bay, Rep. Livingstone usually travels on foot, but on the rare occasions when he does drive in the neighborhood, he said he's acutely aware of increased traffic volumes at Berkeley and Arlington streets for much of the day.

"And it doesn't take much to trigger a cascading traffic jam off those ripples," he added.

Construction in the road, a vehicle double-parked, or a car breaking down, he said, can cause "ripples throughout the area and remove part of the grid and only make those ripples significantly worse."

But Rep. Livingstone said he too wouldn't object to occasional closings on Dartmouth Street for special city events.

"Closing Dartmouth Street for occasional special events, as we currently do, I'm fine with," he said, "and I look forward

to greater public discussion on what these occasional big events would look like."

Council President Flynn outlined his concerns with the Copley Connect plan, especially regarding its potential impact on public safety, in a letter dated Feb. 7 to Jascha Franklin-Hodge, the city's chief of streets, and Arthur Jemison, chief of planning for the BPDA.

"Dartmouth Street, along with Berkeley Street, are two of the main thoroughfares for residents traveling north from South End and St. Botolph into Back Bay," Council President Flynn wrote in part. "Our first responder units - Boston Police Department D-4, Boston Emergency Medical Services headquarters, and two supporting arms of the Boston Fire Department at Bay Village (Engine 7 Ladder 17) and South End (Engine 22) - are all located south of Back Bay. Currently, in the event of an emergency, these units would utilize either Dartmouth Street or Berkeley Street."

Council President Flynn continued: "Permanently shutting down Dartmouth Street at Copley will not only increase traffic times at an already congested Berkeley Street, but also critical response times. With a significant number of residents, businesses, hotels, schools and colleges interwoven across Back Bay, it would not only be unwise but irresponsible from a public safety standpoint should there be an emergency in the area."

"Every second is critical when it comes to public safety," he wrote.

("Emergency vehicle access on Dartmouth Street will continue to be an important design consideration," according to the city.)

Over the past year, City Council President Flynn said he has received numerous calls, emails, and letters from nearby residents and businesses, as well as from NABB, expressing their concerns and opposition to Copley Connect.

"In the feedback I have

received from residents in the area, a consistent theme has emerged regarding transparency and concerns about the community process, with their position being that it has been completely bypassed with minimal neighborhood engagement," wrote Council President Flynn.

Meanwhile, Councilor Bok believes the biggest question ultimately comes down to what the area should look like.

"For me, the biggest question we need to collectively answer right now is actually not about regulation or closure, it's about how this space should look," she wrote. "At a time when we're redoing both Copley Square and the BPL front steps very soon, I think there's an obvious opportunity to put in some beautiful pavers and create that continuous European square visual, anchored by the architectural splendor of Trinity Church and the Central Library."

"As we know from Downtown Crossing, we can have special pavers in an area that cars, buses, and emergency vehicles still traverse, or that closes on Sundays or for special occasions. Even as I've heard major concerns from my Back Bay constituents about permanent closure, I've heard lots of enthusiasm for the beautification of that block, so I'm looking forward to zeroing in more on that aspect," added Councilor Bok.

GSEM SPREAD SOME LOVE ON VALENTINE'S DAY

The Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts (GSEMA) celebrated Valentine's Day this year by donating cookies to seven local non-profit organizations in the Greater Boston Area for their annual 'Share the Love' event. The Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts spent the day deliv-

ering 1,100 cases (that's nearly 250,000 cookies) of their famous cookies to those who might not be able to spend the day with their loved ones. In hopes to share some love on cupid's holiday GSEMA stopped at Fenway Health with 28 cases of cookies.



The Chief Executive Officer of GSEMA, Barbara Fortier, with the Chief Executive Officer of Fenway Health, Ellen LaPointe, and donated cookies in a rainbow assortment!



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COURTESY OF FRIENDS OF THE PUBLIC GARDEN

Parade-goers are seen during last year's Duckling Day event.

Duckling Day event set to return Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14

By Dan Murphy

Continuing a beloved annual Mother's Day tradition of more than 30 years, the Friends of the Public Garden will again partner with the Boston Parks Department for the Duckling Day event on Sunday, May 14, from 10 a.m. to noon.

"We are delighted to be able to honor and celebrate our neighbors and families

with this event that has become a true hallmark of springtime in Boston," said Liz Vizza, president of the Friends

of the Public Garden. "We hope this year's Duckling Day sparks a renewed sense of delight in all that's possible in our cherished outdoor spaces."

Every year, hundreds of participating children, dressed as their favorite characters from Robert McCloskey's classic children's book, "Make Way for Ducklings," join the parade led by the Harvard Marching Band. The parade route begins on the Boston Common at the Parkman Bandstand and ends in the Public

(DUCKLING DAY Pg. 7)

BACK BAY FENS (from pg. 1)

while the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation owns the land around the perimeter of the park and on the edges of Agassiz Road.

Zick described the project as "primarily a pathway and entry-way project," with a scope that includes "accessibility; desirability and uses; stormwater and runoff; materials; and pathway longevity."

Besides a new Evans Way Bridge, which will be funded in part through a \$650,000 city CPA (Community Preservation Act) grant, two other existing footbridges are located within the Fens, he said.

Zick said he was awaiting the imminent completion of a site survey, which would study accessibility at the parks entrances, adding that he expects the new Evans Way Bridge "will change

circulation quite a bit."

Additionally, Zick described the basketball courts and the Kelleher Rose Garden as "the heart of the park" and said publicly accessible garden plots in the Victory Gardens present an opportunity for accessible pathways to reach them.

Said Zick: "It would be easy to just say we're going to repave to make all the pathways that exist in better condition. But this is also a once-in-a-generation chance to look at these and say whether these paths are in the right spot, are they the right width, are they performing all the tasks and programming we want them to."

The first design option presented by Zick kept the pathways essentially the same while adding a new segment that connect the new Evans Way Bridge

to Jersey Street and other places.

A second option unveiled by Zick would mirror the first option, including the connection for the Evans Way Bridge, while creating a "slight arch" on a path to line up the connection between the Rose Garden and the basketball courts.

A third options anticipates that the Evans Way Bridge would greatly change "traffic patterns" for pedestrians in the park and therefore add a new pathway segment across the lawn from the new bridge to the Rose Garden and other destinations further north.

A fourth option presented would create a new pathway between the new Evans Way Bridge and Jersey Street or cut across the lawn to the north without connecting to the Rose Garden.

A fifth option would create a new pathway to Jersey Street while having less of an impact on the existing lawn, according to Zick.

Regarding lighting for the site, Zick said the pathway from the Evans Way Bridge to Jersey Street would be illuminated using modern, acorn LED fixtures found throughout the city while more lighting would also be added at the War Memorial and at the basketball courts, among other locations.

Besides lighting fixtures, the project will also take into account other site furnishings, like benches and other seating; drinking fountains; signage; and

trash receptacles, Zick said.

Vegetation management around the pathways will also be incorporated into the plan, added Zick, although it's now unclear whether any trees would be removed as part of the project, pending completion of the site survey.

In response to community concerns raised at previous meetings, all inner pathways within the site, as well as the Evans Way Bridge and the two existing footbridges, would be accessible only to pedestrians and not bicyclists, said Bryant.

"We decided not to change the rules around city pathways in the Back Bay Fens," she said.

Meanwhile, the city will be holding a series of meetings next month on various aspects of the project, said Bryant, including a March 23 meeting on the Victory Gardens; and a March 28 meeting on the War Memorial, the Evans Way Bridge, and the O'Reilly Monument.

A meeting on the Pathways was originally scheduled for March 22, she added, but that meeting will be rescheduled to another time that doesn't conflict with the 61st annual meeting of the Fenway Civic Association also scheduled for that same evening.

Like other meeting-goers, Marie Fukuda, a Fenway Civic Association board member and longtime Fenway resident, lauded the project team for their work so far, especially for taking community input into account.

Fukuda asked that a rectangular lawn near existing the basketball courts, especially near the west side, be preserved for passive use when designing pathways to the courts.

Tim Horn, president of the Fenway Civic Association, advised the project team to look at "desire lines" when reconfiguring the pathways "because those desire times won't change over time when we look at the other paths."

Horn also pointed to the need for benches and other seating to allow elderly visitors a place in the Grove section of the park to stop and rest on the way to their gardens, or to stop for lunch. But he suggested that benches and other seating fixtures should probably only extend about 4 feet wide so that "it doesn't encourage people to sleep through the night."

Pam Jorgensen, president of the Fenway Victory Gardens board of directors, cautioned against the addition of any picnic tables while agreeing with Horn's recommendation to make the benches shorter to help discourage the existing problem of illegal drug use and other nefarious activity in the park.

"The amenity that they are is probably going to attract activity that we don't want," she said.

Visit <https://www.boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/improvements-back-bay-fens-pathways> for more information on the project.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

FENWAY CIVIC ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR MARCH 22

The Fenway Civic Association will hold its 61st annual meeting on Wednesday, March 22, from 6 to 8 p.m. at 1325 Boylston St., 10th floor.

The meeting, which is free and open to the public, will include refreshments and social time, as well as remarks from Fenway representatives.

For more information, visit www.fenwaycivic.org.

SOUTH END HISTORICAL SOCIETY VIRTUAL HOUSE TOUR SCHEDULED

The South End Historical Society (SEHS) will hold its 54th annual South End House Tour from March 6 through March 13. As a result of the unpredictability of COVID-19 it will be presented virtually through an online video. Tickets for the House Tour are \$20 and available at www.southendhistoricalsociety.org/housetour.

This event is the South End Historical Society's single fundraising event for the year and purchasing a ticket supports its mission to preserve and protect the South End's history and architectural heritage for current and future generations.

Starting in the 1960s, founding member Doe Sprogis organized the South End Historical Society's first four house tours. She continued to be a driving force behind every one of them until 2014, when she and her husband David opened up their own home at 184 West Brook-



Shown above, NEADS Service Dog Ambassadors Verna and Loring, with Chief Development and Programs Officer, Cathy Zemaitis (center), were on hand to accept the donation from SKAL Boston's 2022 President, Mary Chin (left) and General Manager of the Colonnade Boston, David Colella (right).

NEADS World Class Service Dogs of Princeton, Mass., recently accepted a \$50,000 donation from the SKAL Boston Chapter. NEADS was honored as the 2022 charity recipient of the SKAL Boston Chapter annual holiday luncheon in December, which raised the funds for their mission to breed, raise, and train World Class Service Dogs. Skål International is a global organization which brings together tourism and hospitality professionals across chapters worldwide. The luncheon was hosted at the Colonnade Boston.

line Street for what turned out to be her last tour. Doe passed away in 2015, but the House Tour lives on and continues in her memory.

The South End Historical Society was founded in 1966 to preserve the architectural fabric of this unique urban neighborhood. In 1973, their efforts

resulted in the South End being placed on the National Register of Historic Places and ultimately its designation as a Boston Landmark District in 1983.

For more information, please contact Jason Amos at admin@southendhistoricalsociety.org.

Rep. Livingstone named House Chair of Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities

By Dan Murphy

Rep. Jay Livingstone has been named the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

"I greatly appreciate the faith that Speaker Mariano has put in me by giving me this appointment," said Rep. Livingstone,

"and I look forward to working to improve the social safety net in Massachusetts."

The Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities, according to the Massachusetts state legislature website, considers "all matters concerning child welfare, juvenile justice, public welfare, and children and adults with physi-

cal, developmental or intellectual disabilities" while overseeing the Departments of Children and Families, Developmental Services; Transitional Assistance and Youth Services; the Massachusetts Commissions for the Blind, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.

DUCKLING DAY (from pg. 6)

Garden near the Make Way for Ducklings sculpture.

While Nancy Schön, who created the iconic Ducklings sculpture won't be on hand for the event, she said, "I think that it's wonderful that children of all ages dress up for Duckling Day, and that they're honoring their mothers while at the same time honoring Mrs. Mallard and her babies."

Playtime on the Common will take place ahead of the parade and include Interactive Circus Games with Esh Circus Arts; Jenny the Juggler; Peter O'Malley, magician; Jump, climb, and play with Knucklebones; a chance to meet the giant Duck; a visit with the Harvard University Band; a "Make Way for Ducklings" reading station; and a goody bag for every kid filled with Duckling Day-themed items.

"All families are welcome to decorate their wagons or strollers, bring a picnic, and enjoy springtime in Boston's most beloved parks," according to the Friends.

Participants are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated and boosted if they are eligible. For the safety of our most vulnerable attendees, all event staff and volunteers have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

The registration fee is \$35 per family in advance (before May 12) and \$40 per family the day of the event. Each child who registers will receive a special goody bag. Register at <https://friendsofthepublicgarden.org/2022/12/01/ducklingday2023/>.

For more information on Duckling Day, visit <https://friendsofthepublicgarden.org/events/ducklingday/>.

Feature of the Month!

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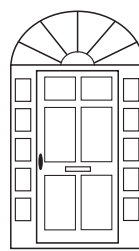
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CITY PAWS

Dogs at transition points

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Throughout our lives, we encounter transition points, both positive and negative. We've noticed that these are often moments when people think about adding a dog to their lives. In each case, there are pros and cons you should consider.

Some common transition points are reaching a significant age; setting up your first home; moving in with someone else; getting married; becoming a parent; changing jobs; retiring; or losing an important person or animal.

Job Change

The transition to remote work during the pandemic made it possible for many people to add a dog to their lives. As some of these folks return to the office, they and their dogs must learn to live with that change.

A job change can also mean moving, longer hours, and more or less travel. These can impact your relationship with current animal companions, and in some cases, may raise the possibility of

adding an animal to your family.

Retirement

Leaving the world of work or moving to a semi-working status is a transition point that can have a massive impact on your lifestyle and your ability to make choices that can be good or bad for your mental and physical well-being.

Research has found that dogs positively impact the lives of people of retirement age. Patti Murphy, writing for www.travel-awaits.com, said, "After I retired I noticed that I had a lot more free time and occasional boredom creeping in. Having a dog has helped fill some of that time and given me company on days when not much else is going on. We play, we walk, we do training, and I take him to visit family members who no longer have their pets and miss having a lively creature around."

Research has shown that dogs provide a reason to exercise and become part of a community. These are important factors for heart health and cognitive function. Increased social interaction,

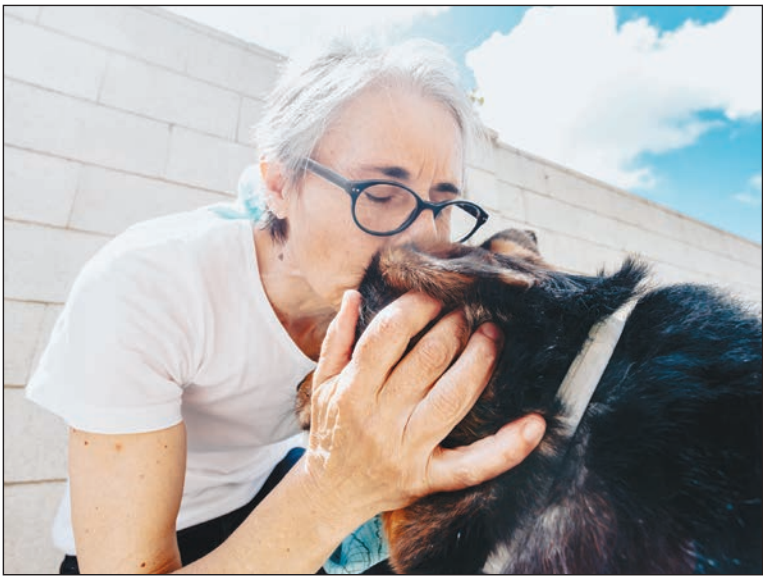
companionship, daily routine, and the unconditional love of a dog can do wonders for our quality of life and mental health.

However, there are factors that must enter into your decision-making. Murphy suggests that retirees consider the size and strength of a dog who might pull on a walk and sometimes need a lift from you. She also recommends a more mature animal who might need less training and have less energy to burn off daily.

Moving to a New Home

Over the years, we've conducted home visits for various rescue groups. Quite a number of these were for young individuals or couples setting up their first home or home together.

One of the first questions in the adoption process is whether or not dogs are allowed in the building and under the lease. We gave a top approval rating to a couple from the Midwest who moved to Boston. They had leased a dog-friendly apartment, planned where they would walk a dog, and found a nearby veteri-



Research has found that dogs positively impact the lives of people of retirement age. (Photo by Ave Calvar)

nary hospital. Both were engaged in the adoption process and were enthusiastic about having a dog.

If you already have animals in your home when you relocate, let those critters get used to their new place before introducing an additional family member. Moving is stressful for our furry companions, just as it is for the

humans in the family. It will be harder to give a new dog the time and peaceful atmosphere needed to transition to a new home and family.

Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your request.

MWRA to temporarily shut down fluoride system

Starting in late February, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority will be replacing portions of the equipment that feeds fluoride into its drinking water. During this period, MWRA will not be adding fluoride to the water. This work is expected to take about three months to complete.

MWRA has worked closely with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on this issue. While fluoride is important for dental health, health officials believe that this short-term shutdown will not pose any risk to dental health and will not require any special action by consumers.

Fluoride has been added to the region's water since the 1970s. The US Centers for Disease Control recommends its usage for reducing tooth decay and promoting community public

health. MWRA also consulted with the Department of Public Health Oral Health Office and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, both of which approved this temporary fluoride shutdown.

MWRA treats drinking water from the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs at the John J. Carroll Treatment Plant in Marlborough. In addition to fluoride, water is treated with both ozone and ultraviolet light for disinfection, and the pH is adjusted to make the water less corrosive and less likely to leach lead from home plumbing.

If you have any concerns, check with your dental care provider. For more information on your drinking water, please visit www.mwra.com or call MWRA at 617-242-7283.

SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Boston Sun encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403. We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to deb@thebostonsun.com

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Mayor Wu announces Citywide permanent outdoor dining program

Special to the Sun

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the City of Boston's Permanent Outdoor Dining Program, in coordination with the Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion (OEOI), the Streets Cabinet, and the Disabilities Commission. The permanent program creates a predictable, streamlined process for business owners that will expedite application review and allow for annual renewals. It incorporates the activation of public space enjoyed during the temporary program, but addresses issues such as barriers to accessibility and concerns from public safety officials. The application to participate in the permanent program will be made available later this month with the goal of restaurant patios opening as early as May 1. The new program will include a monthly fee for all participants to help fund efforts to further expand outdoor dining more equitably across the City.

"Outdoor dining expanded as a way to keep our businesses open during the pandemic, and has turned into a popular opportunity to enjoy our streets and each other's company," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "The Permanent Outdoor Dining Program is a multi-departmental collaboration to reimagine our public space for the benefit of residents, business owners, and visitors. We've taken what we learned over the last couple years to inform the permanent program, and we're committed to working with our neighborhoods to make this program a success."

"The outdoor dining program served as a lifeline to many small businesses in the City to ensure that they could keep their doors open throughout the pandemic," said Segun Idowu, Chief of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion. "With the success of the program, I am excited for the program to continue to operate and to keep our neighborhoods vibrant moving forward."

Business owners will be able to apply via an online portal which will be open starting on February 23, 2023. Through this portal, businesses will be able to submit their applications, track application progress, and renew the Outdoor Dining Permit annually. The application to apply will be available here.

"We were so excited to hear about the return of outdoor din-

ing. For us, as a small restaurant the pandemic forced us to get creative, and the outdoor dining program has been a critical component to our sustainability and recovery. We saw changes in consumer behavior when we were forced to rethink the way we use public spaces," said Andy Fadous, co-owner of American Provisions & Gray's Hall. "With our two businesses on East Broadway & I Street in South Boston, we were able to provide an outdoor space for the community in both the morning and evenings, open longer hours and employ more staff."

The permanent program requires businesses to submit professionally engineered site plans for outdoor dining setups on the street and sidewalk to ensure all patios meet the requirements of the state building code. The COVID-19 temporary program allowed for hand-drawn site plans and portable ramps under a temporary variance from the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB). The City has prepared multiple sample templates, which have been informed by the Disabilities Commission and approved by the MAAB for permanent use. The City has designated a staff member to help restaurant owners with technical assistance on engineering plans.

"With spring around the corner, we're very excited for the return of the city's outdoor dining program here in Allston," said Alex Cornacchini, the Executive Director of Allston Village Main Streets. "The last few years have shown that our restaurants have benefited from the added seating capacity, residents have benefited from the safer seating options during COVID, and the whole neighborhood has benefited from the added vibrancy these pop up patios produce."

In 2020, the Outdoor Dining Pilot Program was created under temporary state legislation as a business relief response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to any of the temporary outdoor dining programs, fees were collected for the City's Sidewalk Cafe Program, which predated the pandemic.

Going forward, all approved businesses participating in outdoor dining will be required to pay \$399 per month if they have a liquor license and \$199 per month if they do not. Fees will go toward technical assistance for hiring architects to draft site

plans, with the goal of expanding the program to businesses that would not otherwise be able to participate.

"The last few years have shown that our restaurants have benefited from the added seating capacity, residents have benefited from the safer seating options during COVID, and the whole neighborhood has benefited from the added vibrancy these pop up patios produce."

The City will not be permitting on-street outdoor dining in the North End this year. Restaurants in the neighborhood with adequate sidewalk width will be eligible to apply for outdoor dining if their proposal complies with accessibility and licensing requirements. Restaurants with privately owned spaces seeking to have outdoor dining patios are encouraged to apply through the Inspectional Services Department.

The scheduled closures of the Sumner Tunnel and continued congestion around the North Washington Street Bridge construction project are expected

to put a greater strain on North End traffic this summer and make it harder for residents and first responders to navigate the area. With about 95 restaurants in just over a third of a square mile, the North End has the densest per capita number of restaurants in the state. This has brought unique challenges and quality of life issues expressed by residents over the course of the temporary programs, including increased traffic, sanitation issues, and accessibility problems for older residents and those with limited mobility. The City will be creating a task force to determine how these issues could be remedied in future iterations of the permanent program. This year, the City will buy back jersey barriers from North End restaurant owners and provide relief for costs related to storing these items.

The City previously held two Citywide meetings to brief business owners and residents on the permanent program and collect feedback. City officials have heard from residents throughout the temporary program and used neighborhood concerns to inform the permanent program. Restaurants applying for the program are encouraged to actively involve residents, community members, and civic groups to discuss future plans for outdoor dining patios on any public space. Residents and community members can

share their comments regarding restaurants applying to the program to the dedicated outdoor dining email address (outdoor-dining@boston.gov) before the business's Boston Licensing Board hearing date. Residents and community members with feedback are also encouraged to attend the scheduled Boston Licensing Board hearing.

The Permanent Outdoor Dining Program builds off of Mayor Wu's commitment to reimagine how Boston streets work for residents and visitors and how reconfiguring public spaces can foster community. In January, the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) announced findings from the Copley Connect pilot in summer of 2022. Following the success of the pilot, transportation planners with the BPDA and BTDA intend to study permanent improvements to Dartmouth Street between the Boston Public Library and Copley Square Park that would improve the public realm between three of Boston's most iconic civic spaces and formally unify Copley Square. Additionally, the Boston Transportation Department will be announcing more Open Streets events in the coming months following the success of last year's events creating more than a mile of car-free space in Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, and Dorchester.



Virtual Public Meeting

Fenway Zoning Public Meeting #2

March 8, 2023

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/413W98M

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 161 023 7890



Project Description:

Please join BPDA planning staff for a virtual public meeting focused on zoning in **West Fenway**. The team will review the established neighborhood planning context and community feedback received to date, and introduce draft recommendations for revisions to Article 66. Presentation materials will be translated into Cantonese and Mandarin with simultaneous interpretation in those languages provided for the meeting. Materials from the meeting, including a recording of the event, will be posted to the project website bit.ly/bostonplans-Fenway-Kenmore.

Meet the members of the Boston Planning & Development Agency's planning team, share your ideas, and learn about the planning process and how you can get involved.

Comments:

mail to: **Cyrus Miceli**

Boston Planning & Development Agency

One City Hall Square, 9th Floor

Boston, MA 02201

phone: 617.918.4423

email: cyrus.miceli@boston.gov

website: bit.ly/bostonplans-Fenway-Kenmore

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

Mayor Michelle Wu, former Mayor Kim Janey to be recognized at Boston Arts Academy Foundation Champion Reception

Special to the Sun

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and former Mayor Kim Janey will be honored by Boston Arts Academy and Boston Arts Academy Foundation with the prestigious Champion Award at the 2023 Boston Arts Academy Foundation Champion Reception on March 16. The event will take place at the iconic House of Blues in Fenway on Lansdowne Street and will be followed by the opening night all-star performance of *Shrek The Musical*, put on entirely by Boston Arts Academy students. This will be the first live production in the school's newly opened theater, and the first major production in-person in two years.

"We are so thrilled to honor Mayor Michelle Wu and former Mayor Kim Janey as our 2023 Champions," said Boston Arts Academy Foundation President and CEO Denella J. Clark. "March is Women's History Month, and I can't think of a better way to celebrate than by honoring the first two women mayors in Boston who both champion our students and the arts community."

Boston Arts Academy Foundation is an independent charitable non-profit organization that helps bridge the growing gap between the Boston Arts Academy's allocation from the Boston Public Schools, and the true cost

of a high-quality education that is both arts-intensive and college preparatory. In 2018, Boston Arts Academy Foundation led a six-year, \$32 million comprehensive campaign called Building Our Future designed to elevate the visibility of and support for Boston Arts Academy, and to ensure the sustainability of this unique education model. In just five years, Boston Arts Academy Foundation is halfway through the campaign and have exceeded the campaign's \$20M milestone goal.

Each year, Boston Arts Academy Foundation presents the Champion Award to a member of the community who embodies the school's commitment to the arts, scholarship, and citizenship. Previous BAAF Champion Award honorees include former First Lady of Massachusetts Diane Patrick, former Boston Mayor, current United States Secretary of Labor Martin J. Walsh, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey and former Governor Charlie Baker.

Mayor Michelle Wu is particularly excited to be honored by such a diverse and inclusive organization. "Boston Arts Academy is an example of how we all benefit when we invest in our young people and give them the resources they need to succeed," said Mayor Wu. "I'm honored

to work alongside the Boston Arts Academy Foundation and all the partners who have helped to make modernized, energy-efficient school buildings like BAA a possibility."

Mayor Wu has been a voice for accessibility, transparency, and community engagement in city leadership since being elected to the Boston City Council in November 2013. As a classical trained pianist, Mayor Wu continues to be a strong advocate for the arts in Boston. We witnessed her dedication to the arts shortly after her inauguration as Mayor, when she had the city-owned piano moved into her office so that she could play. In 2023 she pledged to make the largest investment ever in artists and the arts. She has backed that up by investing up to \$1.7 million to preserve affordable artist workspaces in Dorchester.

In addition to Mayor Wu, former Mayor Kim Janey will also be honored by Boston Arts Academy Foundation. As Boston's first woman and first black mayor, Mayor Janey successfully led the city through a multitude of unprecedented challenges, including the COVID-19 global pandemic. Mayor Janey introduced a citywide agenda of recovery and reopening, focusing on health and wellness while elevating arts and culture. Janey started the "Joy Agenda",



Former Boston Mayor Kim Janey.

a city-wide program that featured investment in recovery and renewal through supporting arts and culture workers, local small businesses, and youth. Currently, Mayor Janey is President and CEO of the Boston-based non-profit, Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath).

"The work being done by Boston Arts Academy Foundation is critical towards the advancement of arts and academic education in our city," said Janey. "Champion Reception is a great example of how our community leaders can come together to support the highly talented and creative students at Boston Arts Academy. I am honored to be recognized as a champion for our community and will continue to be a champion for the arts and our youth."

At the completion of the reception, guests will walk across



Mayor Michelle Wu.

the street and be treated to the first-ever musical performed in Boston Arts Academy's new theater. The inaugural show, *Shrek The Musical*, is an entirely student run production. Boston Arts Academy chose the show because of the themes of inclusiveness and the welcoming of the diverse and underrepresented is in line with the culture of BAA.

Tickets to Champion Reception and opening night of *Shrek The Musical* are available for a donation of \$125, while a ticket for all other performances are \$25. Proceeds from the event will directly support BAA's arts programming and more. For more information and to purchase tickets for all four performances of *Shrek The Musical*, visit <https://bostonartsacademy.org/foundation/event/champion-reception-2023>

Council President Flynn calls for Affordable Housing Tax exemption for below market rent

Staff Report

At Wednesday's Government Operations Hearing on rent stabilization, Council President Flynn proposed an affordable housing tax exemption for property owners

that charge below market rate rent in the City of Boston. Currently, the City of Boston has a number of tax exemptions for homeowners who own and occupy their property. Under Council President Flynn's proposal, there

would be a \$6,000 tax exemption for property owners willing to charge \$500 a month below market rate rents.

At the hearing, Council President Flynn discussed the urgent need to increase the city's housing stock as well as affordable units through the city's Inclusionary Development Policy program while emphasizing that these actions all take considerable time in terms of proposals, community process, approvals, permits, construction, lotteries and occupancy.

However, a Rent Reduction Act featuring an affordable housing tax exemption that incentivizes reducing rents by \$500 per month below market rate would provide units across the city to come online much more quickly

in the next fiscal year, and before the city's heaviest turnover on September 1st.

To offset the tax exemption, money from the Community Preservation Fund, the Neighborhood Trust and Linkage money from future projects, as well as federal funds can be utilized. The property owner would be required to register the unit with the city and provide proof of reduced rent to receive the property tax credit. This proposal aims to incentivize Boston's current property owners to be stakeholders by charging below market rents, and provide an opportunity for affordable units to come on-line more quickly. Council President Flynn plans on submitting this proposal as an amendment to the home rule

petition.

"Our housing crisis calls for creative and bold solutions to get as many affordable units online as quickly as possible," said Council President Flynn. "An affordable housing tax exemption could provide relief for working families in every neighborhood of the city by the next fiscal year, reward property owners who have been good neighbors in quietly providing below market rents for years to help families stay in the city, and encourage other housing providers to join them in being a good neighbor."

For more information, please contact Council President Flynn's office at 617-635-3203 and Ed. Flynn@Boston.gov.

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Bfs1209 LLC	Chambers, Herbert G	220 Boylston St #1209	\$12,500,000
Stone Ark Nt	Hegenbart, Joseph J	776 Boylston St #E12E	\$2,800,000
Smith, Anthony H	Mallon, Elizabeth A	16 Exeter St #1	\$5,200,000
Gardner, Jordan	Mepani, Amol	199 Marlborough St #102	\$1,125,000
Gutierrez, Gloria M	Stagshorn Ventures LLC	305 Commonwealth Ave #2	\$8,400,000
Cuzzupoli, Joseph	Rinehimer Jr, Willard C	340 Commonwealth Ave #2	\$1,550,000

BEACON HILL

Rens, Neil	Browne, Camellia	10 Bowdoin St #208	\$381,095
Luo, Andrew	Starlight Holdings LLC	2 Hawthorne Pl #7P	\$350,000
Robbie, Benjamin	Shanti Acquisition LLC	36 Temple St #40	\$765,000

BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE

Condon, Dennis	Bjb103 LLC	1 Charles St S #PH103	\$3,275,000
407122 Columbus Avenue Nt	Husain, Shaheen	219-223 Columbus Ave #704	\$1,765,000
48 Montgomery St Renaissa	Sherwood, Robert A	48 Montgomery St	\$2,025,000
Jacob Wirth Nt	Gemutlichkeit LLC	31-45 Stuart St	\$5,267,805
Jacob Wirth Nt	Gemutlichkeit LLC	33 Stuart St	\$5,267,805
Jacob Wirth Nt	Gemutlichkeit LLC	35 Stuart St	\$5,267,805
Jacob Wirth Nt	Gemutlichkeit LLC	37 Stuart St	\$5,267,805
Jacob Wirth Nt	Gemutlichkeit LLC	39 Stuart St	\$5,267,805
Bruce, Robert J	Columbus Condo LLC	565 Columbus Ave #1	\$1,175,000
Louie, Dana M	Columbus Condo LLC	567 Columbus Ave #2	\$1,062,500
Trustees Of Boston Univ	Rref li Kenmore Lessor I	11-19 Deerfield St	\$56,000,000
Trustees Of Boston Univ	Rref li Kenmore Lessor I	19 Deerfield St	\$56,000,000
Kessler, Andrew I	Carl M Geupel RET	21 Father Francis Gilday St #114	\$1,120,000
Wang, Hongmei	Zhang, Kristy J	465 Park Dr #6	\$392,000
Raghuram Ft	Leech, Paul	50-52 Rutland Sq #5	\$2,100,000
Wong, Brian C	Cooper, Todd	25 Saint Stephen St #2	\$585,000
Sukal, Marlon	Bogdanok, Anna	12 Stoneholm St #511	\$455,000
Comptdaer, Gabriela	Wilfong, Christopher M	663 Tremont St #1	\$880,000
Slan Abhaile Nt	Bennette Jr, James P	1313 Washington St #701	\$2,425,000

WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN

Macklin-Dib RET	Mp Mtb Units LLC	1 Franklin St #3403	\$4,750,000
Colburn, Virginia V	William M Lyons 2018 RET	165 Tremont St #702	\$1,749,000

LEGAL NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Self Storage Sale
Please take notice Prime Storage - Boston South-ampton 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.storage-treasures.com on 3/8/2023 at 12:00 PM. Unless stated otherwise the

description of the contents are household goods and furnishings. Eolar Stewart unit #1109; Jorge A Montenegro unit #2068; Wayne Rice unit #3070; Justin Kelly/Insulet Corp. unit #3248; Walter Davis unit #3308; Alfred Miles unit #4038; Kathryn Johnson unit #4048; Robert Kendrick unit #4070; Chosen O Ja'Mima'Ni unit #4075; David Everett unit #4174; Joanna Fernandez

unit #4310. 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.

2/16/23, 2/23/23
BS

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Self Storage Sale
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.storage-treasures.com on 3/8/2023 at 12:00 PM. Unless stated otherwise the

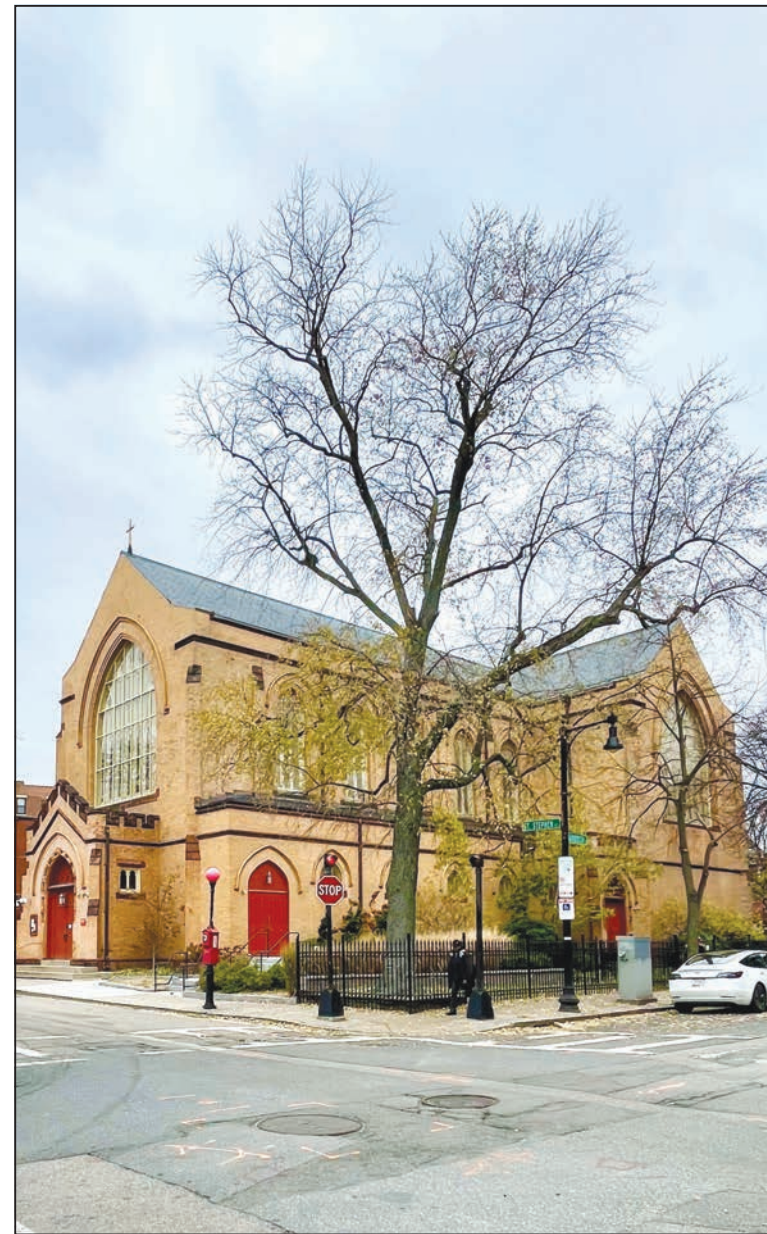
description of the contents are household goods and furnishings. Andrew Roscillo unit #206; Jeff Landry unit #400; Jingyuan Wang unit #541. All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details.

2/16/23, 2/23/23
BS

Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The light in the last clue is on 77 St. Steven Street, home of Northeastern University's Fenway Center since 2007. William Rawn Associates designed the adaptive reuse of St. Ann's Church into a space with theater seating for 300, banquet space for 120, and a reception facility for 250.

The next clue will be found in the South End.
Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

THIS WEEK'S CLUE



NEW LISTINGS AT CAMPION

20 SEARS ROAD, BROOKLINE

7 BEDROOMS | 7 FULL 2 HALF BATHROOMS | 9,300 SQUARE FEET

LISTED AT \$9,250,000



SCAN TO
VIEW PROPERTY



776 BOYLSTON STREET, RESIDENCE E9D

2 BEDROOMS | 2 FULL 1 HALF BATHROOMS | 2,204 SQUARE FEET

LISTED AT \$5,690,000



SCAN TO
VIEW PROPERTY



CAMPION & COMPANY
EXCLUSIVE LISTING

TRACY CAMPION
617-236-0711
TCAMPION@CAMPIONRE.COM

172 Newbury Street • Boston, Massachusetts • 617.236.0711 • www.CampionRE.com