



THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2023

# THE BOSTON SUN

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SERVING BACK BAY - SOUTH END - FENWAY - KENMORE

## Durkan sworn in as District 8 city councilor

By Dan Murphy

Beacon Hill resident and long-time political organizer Sharon Durkan was sworn in as the new District 8 city councilor by Mayor Michelle Wu during a special ceremony on Tuesday, Aug. 15, in the Public Garden.

"I'm so grateful for this moment," said Durkan. "I'm so grateful to the people of District 8. I see people all around who have supported me. It's not lost on me that we're in the Public Garden, enjoying a public good. Enjoying something people have protected over many years and generations. I'm so proud to represent you."

Mayor Wu said Durkan, who had received endorsements from a wide range of local elected officials, including Wu herself, had achieved her goal "with a lot of



*Shown above, Mayor Michelle Wu swears in Sharon Durkan as the new District 8 city councilor as Durkan's family members look on during an Aug. 15 ceremony in the Public Garden. Shown left, Sharon Durkan speaks following being sworn in as the new District 8 City Councilor.*

wind beneath her wings" as she reached out to every corner of the district, which includes Back



Bay, Beacon Hill, Fenway, Kenmore, Mission Hill, Allston, and

(DURKAN Pg. 6)

## BTD officials outline planned projects at South End Forum

By Dan Murphy

Boston Transportation Department (BTD) officials were on hand for a virtual South End Forum meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 9, to discuss several transportation projects planned for around the area, including the proposed Berkley Street bike lane, along with the Tremont Street and Columbus Avenue projects, respectively.

Stefanie Seskin, a BTD transportation planner, outlined the city's plan to add a separated bike lane on Berkley Street between Tremont and Beacon

streets, which would connect to a new two-way bike lane on Beacon Street to bring bicyclists to the Esplanade and the Charles River via the Arthur Fiedler Footbridge. About 34 parking spaces will be removed from Berkeley Street to accommodate the proposed bike lane, city officials previously said, but the BTD will also be changing just over 100 metered parking to resident parking, with another approximately 60 existing meter spaces to be converted to resident-only spaces after 6 p.m., resulting in

(SOUTH END FORUM Pg. 4)

## USES pilot benefits selected families via monthly stipends

By Dan Murphy

A pilot sponsored by United South End Settlements (USES), which selected 16 local families to each receive guaranteed, unrestricted monthly payments of \$800 for 18 months, has made a significant impact in the lives of its participants, according to a study on the program recently released by the nonprofit multi-service organization.

USES sponsored S.T.E.P. (Striving Towards Economic Prosperity), which ran between October of 2021 and May of 2023. The pilot's participants comprised 16 families - all single-parent, female-led households who were already involved in the

organization's multi-generational programming in one way or another, from financial coaching to afterschool programs. (While all of the families selected were single-parent, female-led households, that wasn't a requirement, said USES Chief Program Officer Melody Valdes.)

In all, 46 families applied for the program and were then entered into a "randomized" lottery, which put "extra weight" on families with an AMI of 30 percent or lower, said Valdes, "because the focus of the program was on the folks who needed [the funds] the most."

The baseline Average Median Income (AMI) of the selected S.T.E.P. families was 82 percent

of households with an AMI of less than 30 percent, and 18 percent of households with an AMI of between 30 and 50 percent. The average monthly household income was \$1,825, according to the study.

Of the families chosen for the pilot, 31 percent were either Black or African American, or Hispanic or Latina, respectively, according to the study, while 6 percent were white, or identified as "other," respectively. Another 19 percent were of "unknown" ethnicity.

Twelve (originally 17) control-group families were also selected for the program, said

(S.T.E.P. Pg. 5)



COURTESY OF UNITED SOUTH END SETTLEMENTS

Exterior view of United South End Settlements headquarters at 48 Rutland St.



# EDITORIAL

## HOW TO HELP THE MAUI FIRE VICTIMS

The horrific and tragic disaster in the town of Lahaina on the Hawaiian island of Maui has gripped the world this past week. The scope of this tragedy is unimaginable -- photos of the scene look like something from after the atomic bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

But as we all know, it won't be long before this story slips off the national radar screen. However, the rebuilding of this historic community and the lives of its residents, both physically and emotionally, will take years.

There are many ways to help the victims of this disaster and we have listed some of those below that are among the most prominent:

-- The Maui Strong Fund, run by the Hawai'i Community Foundation, is accepting donations for necessities like food, clothing, and shelter for families who have lost their homes.

-- The American Red Cross of Hawaii has 220 trained responders on the ground in Maui helping with search and rescue operations. Donations to the Red Cross are also providing shelter, food ,and emotional support. You can donate to the Red Cross by calling 1-800-HELP NOW (1-800-435-7669).

-- Aloha United Way, a non-profit organization based in Honolulu, has set up a dedicated fund for victims of the Maui wildfire.

-- The Maui Food Bank is accepting donations that will pay for meals provided to displaced residents in Maui.

-- The Maui Humane Society is seeking contributions to fund care for pets displaced by the wildfire.

We urge all of our readers who are able to do so to make some small contribution to help the victims of this horrific natural disaster.

## CLARENCE THOMAS: THE SUPREME COURT FOR SALE

With each new revelation about the extent to which Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has accepted extravagant gifts from assorted billionaires, it has become increasingly clear that Thomas has used his office as a ticket to live the lifestyle of the rich and famous.

The news that Thomas received an all expenses-paid, \$500,000 (that's not a typo) luxury vacation from a Texas billionaire (who also paid for his godson's private school education and bought Thomas's mother's house in Georgia, fully-renovated it, and has allowed her to live there reportedly rent-free) appears to have been just the tip of the iceberg.

Two weeks ago there was the report that another billionaire bought Thomas a \$250,000 motorhome.

Then last week, the on-line investigative journalism publication ProPublica reported that Thomas regularly has received numerous other gifts from assorted other billionaires:

"At least 38 destination vacations, including a previously unreported voyage on a yacht around the Bahamas; 26 private jet flights, plus an additional eight by helicopter; a dozen VIP passes to professional and college sporting events, typically perched in the skybox; two stays at luxury resorts in Florida and Jamaica; and one standing invitation to an uber-exclusive golf club overlooking the Atlantic coast."

Thomas's defenders point out that none of his benefactors ever had cases before him, and therefore his acceptance of these gifts did not involve a conflict of interest. That may be true.

But here's the thing: Even though these billionaires may not themselves directly have had matters before Thomas, he has sided with many decisions that either have upheld their ideological philosophies or that may have benefited their interests indirectly, such as court decisions that have struck down government regulations.

Perhaps the most significant of these was the infamous Citizens United decision (in which Thomas was a deciding vote in the 5-4 majority) in which the Supreme Court struck down the laws that limited political donations by corporations. Thanks to that decision, we have seen the rise of political action committees -- known as PACS -- by which corporations and billionaires can spend unlimited funds on campaign advertising so long as they are not formally "coordinating" with a candidate or political party. The ruling has ushered in massive increases in political spending from outside groups, dramatically expanding the already outsized political influence of wealthy donors.

Clarence Thomas long has been viewed as the most incompetent and least-qualified judge ever to sit on the Supreme Court. But now, he also is by far the most corrupt.

## GUEST OP-ED

### Maui, Devastation can happen anywhere

By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Maui has long been the go-to destination for millions to experience paradise. Life has changed.

Maui is now the site of the deadliest fire in modern U.S. history. At this writing, over 90 persons are been reported dead. The lovely town of Lahaina is nothing but charred remains and embers.

The news reports of people fleeing for their lives via any means of escape possible is horrific. People who were trying to escape in automobiles have been found unrecognizable except through eventual DNA testing. The entire island is now a humanitarian crisis. Medical supplies, food, and shelter are at crisis levels.

Like you, I've watched it from my television. Maui is a tragic global news story that no one wants to hear. Maui's story reminds us that devastation can happen anywhere. It was a hurricane that swept away Ft. Myers Beach last year. A Tornado and flood destroyed parts of Kentucky. Or, it may be the fires that have destroyed so much in California. Maui reminds

us that no paradise is untouchable.

You might feel safe and isolated in Appalachia. You may feel very comfortable in some remote Western terrain. You may live in a comfortable suburb or city surrounded by all types of Emergency Responders; you may be living in a tropical paradise. There are no guarantees that your community is insulated from disaster.

When a tornado, hurricane or flood cripples a community there is nothing to do except pick up the pieces and try to start over. Likewise, Maui has no other choice but it will take years. There is no overnight recuperation for disaster.

There will be ongoing questions about Maui's emergency response abilities. What kind of fire department did Lahaina have? How often had they drilled and prepared for the possibility of a widespread fire? Was it even something that the island thought possible? As the smoke settles, these questions and more will be asked.

If you are reading this in the comfort and safety of your home or apart-

ment then consider this; value what you have when you have it. We all take the present for granted. We take our towns, schools, stores, jobs, incomes, residences, food, health, and each other for granted. We look back to the past and cherish a town that used to be. We cherish a parent or friend who used to be with us. We value and cherish old jobs and past experiences. It's good to cherish the past. However, why not look around you today and value what and who you have -- today.

In the meantime, we certainly pray for the hurting people of Maui. Most Americans will do what they can to be helpful and supportive. We always do. That's one of many reasons our country is so great and blessed.

*Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch, and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist -- American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories, and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.*

### BCYF to host two lifeguard hiring events

Special to the Sun

Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF) is hosting two free lifeguard hiring events on Wednesday, August 23 from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. and Monday, August 28 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the BCYF Mason Pool in Roxbury. Any Boston residents with valid lifeguard certifica-

tion who are interested in working as a lifeguard at a BCYF pool are invited to attend one of the events.

The lifeguard hiring events will combine all the necessary steps to become a lifeguard for a City of Boston pool in one location. These include a swim evaluation, skill evaluation, interview, and paperwork processing. Full-time and part-time

positions are available as well as Head Lifeguard positions.

BCYF lifeguard positions start at \$22/hour and all lifeguards, even those who work part-time hours, are eligible for all the benefits available to City of Boston employees, including generous health, dental and retire-

(BCYF Pg. 3)

# Wu announces expansion of Swim Safe program

Special to the Sun

Mayor Michelle Wu, the City of Boston's Human Services Cabinet, and Boston Centers for Youth & Families announced applications are now open for Swim Safe Boston grants to support non-profit organizations in Boston that provide free aquatics programming to residents. The grant funding follows a successful launch of the Swim Safe program announced this summer. Demand for free swim lessons has been high, demonstrating the need for an expansion of the Swim Safe campaign. Through these grants, the city is allocating additional funding to offer year-round capacity, especially for beginner-level swim lessons.

Additionally, the City is acting with urgency to renovate several city-owned pools, many of which were built in the 1970s. Mayor Wu has made an unprecedented commitment to aquatics programming by commissioning a first-ever citywide evaluation of aquatics infrastructure with the goal of expediting the improvements needed to get city pools back open. In addition to the assessment, this fiscal year, Mayor Wu allocated \$34.3 million in the FY24-FY28 capital plan for repairing and renovating the city's pools.

"Swimming is a life skill that goes beyond the summer months, so we're thrilled to be able to expand the Swim Safe lessons year-round," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I encourage all community partners offering aquatics programming to apply for these grants so we can continue growing this successful initiative. By eliminating financial barriers to lessons and investing in our pool facilities, we're making Boston a safer, more fun place for families."

Interested Swim Safe grant applicants should carefully

review the application materials and fill out this form to be considered for a Swim Safe grant. Awardees must be non-profit organizations that operate aquatics facilities that are located in the City of Boston. The maximum award that will be considered for this opportunity is \$150,000. The grant application will close at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 15, 2023.

Swim Safe is part of Mayor Wu's Connect, Learn, Explore: Commitment to Youth, a commitment to giving Boston youth an opportunity to explore and discover their passions. The funding to support swim instruction builds off the Mayor's commitment to ensure all Boston kids learn to swim and can safely enjoy our City's coastline and pools.

"The Swim Safe Boston grant program will help ensure that our partners have year-round support to help meet the high demand for swim lessons in Boston," said Human Services Chief José F. Massó. "We are excited to see so much enthusiasm for swimming and we want to continue the momentum generated this summer into the school-year."

As a coastal city with numerous pools and natural bodies of water, Boston families have an array of opportunities to enjoy water recreation. Swim Safe is focused on removing barriers to water access and increasing safety among Boston residents. Nationally, fatal drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1-4 years old and the second leading cause of injury death for children ages 5-14 (CDC). Black and Latino youth are less likely to know how to swim and therefore are at higher risk of drowning (CDC).

The City of Boston is seeking to remedy this disparity by investing in swim lessons, repair-

ing the city's public pools, and recruiting and training lifeguards to staff the city's pools. The grant program announced today will be available to organizations that operate pools in Boston and have experience offering programming to the public. Swim lessons will be prioritized for funding, though other free aquatics programming is also eligible for Swim Safe grant support.

"I'm a mom of five year old twin boys and grateful for the opportunity to get them comfortable and safe in the water," said Elizabeth Lendor, whose twin boys are learning to swim at BCYF Hennigan Community Center. "With paid swim programs at capacity in and around the City of Boston, it's nothing short of a miracle that we were able to get a spot for both boys and for free!"

"Boston Centers for Youth & Families is excited to be able to offer funding to support our aquatics partners across the city," said Marta E. Rivera, Commissioner of Boston Centers for Youth & Families. "Together, we operate pools in every neighborhood and will use this partnership to offer free and accessible aquatics programming to Boston's families."

The City of Boston is working across departments to renovate several of our city-owned pools, following years of disinvestment. Over the last 3 months, the City has reopened the BCYF Paris Street Pool in East Boston and the BCYF Hennigan Pool in Jamaica Plain. The BCYF Paris Street Pool reopening was the result of a \$10.2 million investment, featuring an open, airy main entrance and lobby, fully renovated changing rooms, a new pool filter room, mechanical and electrical upgrades, building interior and exterior repairs, and other upgrades making it a more inviting and user-friendly space.

## BCYF (from pg. 2)

ment benefits as well as paid vacation. With pools located in almost every neighborhood of Boston, working at a BCYF pool is a great way to serve your community.

Interested candidates must be at least 18 years old and should bring the following: at least two references, contact information we can follow up on, a state ID or license, and American Red

Cross Lifeguard Certification. Proof of Boston residency will be required later in the application process. We recommend signing up at this link: [bit.ly/BCYFLifeguardHiringEvent](https://bit.ly/BCYFLifeguardHiringEvent). However walk-ins are welcome. If you are interested and can't stop by, more information about lifeguarding at BCYF as well as the link to apply can be found at [Boston.gov/BCYF-Aquatics](https://Boston.gov/BCYF-Aquatics).

BCYF Mason Pool is located at 159 Norfolk Ave in Roxbury. Parking is available next to the pool or on nearby streets or it's a short walk up Proctor Street from any of the buses that serve Massachusetts Avenue.

Lifeguard recruitment and pool renovations are part of Mayor Wu's Swim Safe initiative, a commitment to support Boston residents' safety around water.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### UPCOMING EVENTS SPONSORED BY WORCESTER SQUARE AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

The Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association presents Summer Concerts on Thursday, Aug. 17, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in Worcester Square. Bring a blanket and a snack or dinner and enjoy a variety of musical groups under the trees.

The park will be open for Summer Open Sundays from 1 to 7 p.m. on several Sundays throughout the summer, including on July 30, Aug. 20, and Sept. 24. Enjoy a relaxing time in the park, bring some games and enjoy the view on the square. For hygiene purposes (small park, lots of kiddos running around barefoot), you are asked to leave your pets at home.

You can find updates at online at [worcestersquare.org](https://worcestersquare.org), or at [Facebook.com/worcestersquare/](https://facebook.com/worcestersquare/) events.

### WARD 4 DEMS ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL, CO-HOSTED BY MAYOR MICHELLE WU SET FOR SATURDAY, AUG. 19

The Boston Ward 4 Democratic Committee will host its annual ice cream social, with Mayor Michelle Wu, on Saturday, Aug. 19, from 2 to 4 p.m. in Titus Sparrow Park. All are welcome to join for good ice cream, good toppings, and good company. For more information, email [ward4dems@gmail.com](mailto:ward4dems@gmail.com).

### SUMMER FUN WITH SHERRY ESKIN THIS SUMMER AT SOUTH END LIBRARY PARK

The Boston Public Library presents Summer Fun with Sherry Eskin on Thursdays, Aug. 17, and Sept. 7, 14, 21, and 28 at 10:30 a.m. at the South End Library Park, 685 Tremont St.

Children ages 6 months and up and their caregivers are invited to participate in these in-person summer activities. Every week there may be books, yoga, singing, props, and dancing. No registration is required.

For more information, [www.bpl.org](https://www.bpl.org).

### SOWA SUNDAYS IN AUGUST

The artists of SoWa Artists Guild will also open on Sundays, Aug. 20, and 27 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 450 Harrison Ave.

For more information visit <http://www.sowaartists.com>, <http://facebook.com/SoWaArtistsGuild>, or <https://www.instagram.com/sowaartistsguild/>.

### FREE JAZZ AND BLUES CONCERT AT SOUTH END BRANCH LIBRARY PARK THIS SUMMER

Friends of the South End Branch Library will be sponsoring a free Jazz and Blues concert with Pat Loomis and friends on Tuesday, Aug. 29, at 6:30 p.m. at the South End Branch Library part at 685 Tremont St. Please bring your own chairs.

For more information, visit [friendsofsouthendlibrary.org](https://friendsofsouthendlibrary.org).

### WARD 5 REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE TO MEET SEPT. 5 AT BOSTON PARK PLAZA

The Boston Ward 5 Republican Committee will hold its 2024 Republican U.S. Presidential Primary meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 5, from 6-8 p.m. at the Boston Park Plaza.

### FREE OUTDOOR CONCERTS AT 401 PARK IN THE FENWAY

Berklee College of Music's Summer Series will offer live music from noon to 1:30 p.m. on the outdoor lawn at 401 Park in The Fenway, including Mia Walz on Tuesday, Sept. 5.

Bring your lunch and enjoy free performances that span all genres by musicians from Berklee College of Music. Performances will be rescheduled in the event of inclement of weather.

### MASS AVE. COALITION'S ANNUAL FESTIVAL RETURNS SEPT. 17 TO CHESTER SQUARE

The Mass. Ave. Coalition will hold its annual festival, billed as 'a festival like no other,' on Sunday, Sept. 17, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Chester Square (Massachusetts Avenue).



# News in Brief

Continued from Page 3

The free event will include music, activities, and snacks, and sponsors include Boston Medical Center Health System and Northeastern University.

## OPEN NEWBURY CONTINUES

Newbury Street will be closed

to vehicle traffic every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. until Oct. 15 for Open Newbury.

The route will be the same as previous years, with Newbury Street closed to cars from Berkeley Street to Massachusetts Avenue. Parking will be restricted on Newbury Street and adja-

cent streets, with enforcement beginning at 5 a.m. Signs will be posted informing drivers of the change.

Visit <https://www.boston.gov/departments/transportation/open-newbury-street> for more information on Open Newbury.

## CALL FOR WALKERS: REGISTER FOR THE 35TH ANNUAL BOSTON MARATHON JIMMY FUND WALK

Registration is now open for the 2023 Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk presented by

Hyundai. Scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 1, funds raised from the Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at one of the nation's premier cancer centers, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

(NEWS BRIEFS Pg. 5)

## SOUTH END FORUM (from pg. 1)

a net positive increase in parking for Back Bay residents.

Regarding the city's decision to pursue the installation of a bike lane on Berkeley Street rather than elsewhere, Seskin cited the long history of serious crashes on Berkeley Street while pointing out that Dartmouth Street, which has been suggested by some as an alternate location for the bike lane, is narrower than Berkeley Street and only has parking on one side of the street.

The site of the proposed Berkeley Street bike lane can be viewed in three sections, including between Beacon and Boylston streets, where there's room for a bike lane while keeping with the same number of general lanes by removing parking on one side of the street; north of Columbus Avenue, where all existing general traffic lanes will be retained; and south of Columbus Avenue, where a bike lane could be added while making crosswalks safer and still accommodate traffic in

two remaining lanes, said Seskin.

In implementing the project, signals will be retimed to allow pedestrians more time to traverse crosswalks on Berkley Street, she said, while turn lanes would be added at busy cross-streets to keep people moving at intersections, including northbound to and from Columbus Avenue; northbound onto St. James Street; and right onto Boylston Street.

Park regulations will also be updated to include 15-minute parking areas at high-turnover locations in response to double-parking, added Seskin.

Also, a left-turn-only bus lane would be created on the block between Stuart and St. James streets - the stretch where riders have experienced the longest delays, she said.

A new left-turn lane would be introduced going from Columbus Avenue northbound to Boylston Street, said Seskin, although four metered parking spaces on

Columbus Avenue near the parking lot would need to be eliminated to achieve this goal.

Separated bike lanes would be added between Clarendon and Arlington streets on the same stretch where pop-up bike lanes have been located over the past few years and in a nearly identical layout to them, added Seskin.

"We are trying to wrap this up because Public Works is finally planning to repave the stretch of Berkeley Street from Tremont Street to the [Fiedler Footbridge], so it would be great to implement something at the same time," she said.

Seskin added that Tremont Street project would be concluding before or around the same time as the repaving of Berkeley Street, although she wasn't entirely sure of the scheduling because the projects involved two different contractors.

Regarding the Tremont Street project, Seskin said the contractor is continuing to work through detailed work at intersections and also to address underground utility issues.

Traffic-signal timing will be readjusted intersection by intersection, she said, while the overlaying process is expected to take several weeks to complete.

"We can't commit to anything earlier than November, but we're optimistic about the project," added Seskin.

The 100-percent design package is expected to wrap up soon, she said, while the project is expected to go out to bid before the end of the year. Construction would then likely begin next summer, she said.

"It's not a big project - it's a few blocks," added Seskin. "It's not a multi-season project."

In another matter, the city launched its multi-phase Connect Boston project in the fall of 2019, with Columbus Avenue identified as one of the "focus corridors," said Louisa Gag, a BTM transportation planner.

Columbus Avenue varies in width between Massachusetts Avenue and Arlington Street from 52 to 64 feet, said Gag, while bike lanes range from 4-5 feet wide to non-existent, and the median spans from 5 to 7 feet wide. The street is narrower where there are curb extensions, she added.

As part of the planned Columbus Avenue project, 72 non-compliant ramps will be redesigned to meet accessibility needs, and the street will be resurfaced, said Gag, but the city has made no further decisions about work on Columbus Avenue between Massachusetts Avenue and Clarendon Street.

The BTM is now comparing the results of its June 2023 parking study to findings from its 2019 parking study, she said, and will also collect updated traffic counts this fall. BTM officials will also continue to engage the community on design options, including raised sidewalks on side streets; signal changes; and changes to curb regulations.

Design options are expected to be unveiled later this year, added Gag.

Moreover, Seskin said Columbus Avenue wouldn't be resurfaced until the end of the next construction season, with next summer being the earliest the project would commence.

"We will not resurface Columbus until we have accessible ramp designs for every intersection," added Seskin. "We're trying to be really intentional about it - it's just taking a lot of time. The reality is we have to rebuild a lot of ramps in the city, and that takes a lot of time."

Steve Fox, chair of South End Forum, expressed deep concern regarding this proposed timeframe.

"We need to find a work-around to the timeframe that has been established," he said. "We cannot watch another year of deterioration on Columbus

Avenue, and we need to put our heads together to figure out what we can do."

Seskin responded that since the repaving relies on federal funds, the timeline for this work can't be accelerated.

Additionally, Fox suggested that the city not move ahead with the redesign of Columbus Avenue until after it has had ample time to evaluate Tremont Street "in a workable fashion."

Fox also requested that the city schedule a community meeting focusing just on the Columbus Avenue project "to share data and opinions"; Gag replied she'd be happy to return to speak to the group again on this topic.

Rep. John Moran asked who the stakeholders for this project are and if businesses have been actively engaged in the process; Gag replied that the city had engaged key groups in "targeted outreach" and also went door to door to notify businesses of the project - something that's planned again for the fall.

Meanwhile, the BTM is also proposing the installation of a separated bike lane on Albany Street between Northampton Street and Union Park, along with new crosswalks, where desired, as well as changing curb regulations, where desired, said Gag, who added this project is still in the early stages and hasn't reached the design phase yet.

Jascha Franklin-Hodge, the city's Chief of Streets, was also on hand for the virtual meeting and offered opening remarks.

"Every day, we're working to maintain the infrastructure that we have to provide the core city street services that people rely on, like street sweeping and parking enforcement to trash collection," he said in part. "At the same time, we're charged with doing work that transforms our streets, that makes them safer, that makes them more multi-modal."

Robotics Engineering Manager, F/T, perm. position in Boston, MA. Lead global research & dvlpmnt efforts to explore the feasibility of applying the co. technology to various industrial automation systems. Lead global research & dvlpmnt efforts to extend the capabilities of the co.'s s/ware suites & increase the productivity of its customers. Collaborate w/ the co.'s Sr. mgmt at the highest level in choosing the right direction for pursuing potential business opportunities & extending technical capabilities. Collaborate w/ the Sr. engg mgmt of original eqpmt mfrs of industrial robots in the US, Japan, & the EU & the s/ware & h/ware vendors of industrial robotics applcs on the bldg of system integrations in order to extend the range of applicable applcs for the co.'s robotics s/ware suites. Consult w/ the co. clients & business partners at the Sr. engg mgmt level to identify their applic challenges, to provide feasible solutions by using the co. technology, & to find potential opportunities in the robotics & industrial automation field. Produce architecture dsgns of new robotics systems using the co. technology after performing reqmts gathering & technical & business analysis. Min. Req: Master's deg in Robotics Engg or Mechanical Engg plus a min of 6 yrs exp in the job offd or a rltd occupation leading industrial robotics engg dvlpmnt projects. The reqd exp must incl all of the following: the exp in the dsgn &/or implmtn of industrial robot controllers; the exp in system dsgn &/or implmtn of industrial robotic applcs; & the exp w/ robotic simulation &/or robot simulators. Must be willing to travel worldwide, on short notice or for extended durations; up to 3-4 mos of travel reqd per yr. Submit resume by mail to Joy Ramsbotham, Director, Human Resources, Realtime Robotics, Inc., 27 Wormwood St, Ste 110, Boston, MA 02210; or via e-mail to: joy@rtr.ai

# NEWS IN BRIEF

Continued from Page 4

The Jimmy Fund Walk is the only organized walk permitted on the famed Boston Marathon course, and participants have the flexibility to choose from four distance options: a 5K walk (from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute's Longwood Medical Campus); a 10K walk (from Newton); a Half Marathon walk

(from Wellesley); and a Marathon Walk (from Hopkinton).

All four routes of the Jimmy Fund Walk will culminate at the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric. Due to construction in Copley Square, the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line location has been moved to the Fenway neighbor-

hood for 2023.

To register for the Walk (#JimmyFundWalk) or to support a walker, visit [www.JimmyFundWalk.org](http://www.JimmyFundWalk.org) or call (866) 531-9255. Registrants can enter the promo code NEWS for \$5 off the registration fee. All registered walkers will receive a bib, medal, and a Jimmy Fund Walk T-shirt.

## 'JAZZ ALONG THE CHARLES' SET FOR OCT. 7

Celebrity Series of Boston opens its 2023/24 performance season with the return of "Jazz Along the Charles" - a free jazz event open to all, featuring more than 100 musicians in 25 local jazz ensembles, on Saturday, Oct. 7, from 2 to 4 p.m. along the Esplanade

(rain or shine). Lead sponsors for the event are the Esplanade Association and the Richard K. Lubin Family Foundation.

Performances will be staged in a 1.5 mile loop from Community Boating Inc. along the Dr. Paul Dudley White Shared Use Path. Visit [celebrityseries.org/jatc](http://celebrityseries.org/jatc) for more information.

## S.T.E.P. (from pg. 1)

Valdes, who fit the same demographics as the selected S.T.E.P. families, but unlike them, the control-group families received no monthly stipend from USES. This in turn allowed the organization to better analyze how much of an impact funds from the S.T.E.P. program were having on participating families, added Valdes.

Findings from the report include that median savings per family increased from \$200 to \$1,000 as the percentage of families making regular savings deposits rose from 12 to 73 percent. Median credit card debt decreased from \$3,000

to \$1,000, and while 25 percent of families had challenges meeting basic utility expenses, such as electricity or heating/cooling, at the start of the program, this number had dropped to 7 percent by its end. The pilot "also decreased financial stress, increased emotional well-being, and enabled parents to invest emotionally and financially in their children," according to the report.

One parent bought braces for her son, according to the study, while another participant was able to make long-distance visit to family for the first time in seven years. One more partici-

pant shared how the program helped her while she finished her nursing degree, and yet another parent said she was able to help her daughter purchase her first car.

"[The program] gave a sense of relief and the comfort I needed not to overwork but physically be there for my children," one parent said in the report.

Another parent quoted in the study said, "It has significantly improved our lives and emotional well-being...made me more self-aware as a parent, and it provided peace of mind."

USES conducted assessments of the participating families every

three months, asking the impact that money had but not how they spent the money, which, Valdez said, was an "intentional decision."

"We really wanted to understand how the funds were impacting the families receiving them," she said.

In the first evaluation, however, USES did ask the program's participants to account for how much money they spent on things such as groceries and entertainment, said Valdes, "but then we recognized that data didn't inform us of anything."

USES plans to follow the S.T.E.P. families for another year

after the initial 18-month pilot wraps up, said Valdes, to see what the impacts of the guaranteed monthly stipends had on them, and whether the changes they have made in their spending habits and in their lifestyles are sustainable, or instead just a temporary result of having received the monthly funds.

Meanwhile, USES plans to bring the S.T.E.P. program back in September, said Valdes, with another group of families selected to receive the guaranteed monthly stipends.

Visit <https://www.uses.org/programs/step/> to learn more about USES's S.T.E.P. program.



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# Wu announces grants for energy assessments in affordable housing buildings

Special to the Sun

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) announced the launch of a grant program aimed at supporting deep green energy retrofits (GERs) and decarbonization efforts in existing affordable housing buildings. Mayor Wu initially announced her intention to launch this program in March. The City now has established funding for energy assessments for income-restricted residential

buildings, which is the first step in facilitating significant reductions in energy consumption and carbon emissions. This initiative, supported through ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding, aligns with the City of Boston's commitment to the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO), which sets requirements for large buildings to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions gradually to net zero by 2050. Through this grant program, the City is seeking to

further the Mayor's Green New Deal by creating cleaner affordable housing units to enhance the climate, livability and justice of Boston's communities.

"Creating clean homes and improving the health of our communities must be at the center of our climate action," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm grateful to the Mayor's Office of Housing for their leadership in our Green New Deal efforts to make Boston's buildings greener and more energy efficient."

"By supporting comprehensive energy assessments, we are empowering building owners to make informed decisions and take meaningful steps towards a sustainable and healthier future," said Sheila Dillon, Chief of Housing. "This program aligns with our commitment to BERDO

and reinforces our dedication to equity, affordability, and environmental stewardship. We are excited to partner with building owners and continue our efforts to create a more sustainable and healthy Boston."

As part of the support for deep energy retrofits and decarbonization efforts, building owners of affordable housing now have the opportunity to apply for grants of up to \$10,000. These funds will be allocated towards comprehensive energy assessments, which will enable building owners to evaluate the current performance of their buildings and develop strategies to achieve substantial energy savings and carbon emission reductions. This initiative will also allow the City to gain more insight into the specific measures that can be taken

to significantly reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions in affordable housing.

By completing these comprehensive energy assessments, building owners will not only contribute to a greener environment but also enhance the safety, comfort, and sustainability for residents. Moreover, these assessments can serve as a roadmap offering building-specific strategies to comply with BERDO while providing building owners with valuable guidance. Building owners who complete the assessments will be well-positioned to apply for additional funding from MOH and other sources to implement the identified GER measures.

"We firmly believe that the

(AFFORDABLE HOUSING Pg. 8)

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## BPHC shares respiratory virus guidance ahead of back-to-school season

Special to the Sun

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), is encouraging everyone to prepare for the upcoming cold and flu season as students get ready to go back to school in the coming weeks amid a nationwide uptick in COVID-19 cases.

The average level of COVID-19 particles in Boston's wastewater has increased over the past few weeks (569 RNA copies/mL as of July 30); however, new weekly COVID-19 related hospitalizations are still low (35 through August 5). These increases are not cause for immediate concern but are important to be aware of with back-to-school season, cooler temperatures, and cold and flu season all approaching.

"Preparation is key when planning for a new school year and the changing of the seasons. Cold and flu season always poses a risk, but there are several steps we can all take to protect ourselves and others, including vaccination," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. "Everyone in your household should be up to date on vaccinations to reduce the risk of severe illness this season."

BPHC reminds residents that

the City experienced a high level of flu activity last year, the highest in three years, and that flu season will likely begin in October. As families prepare to send their children back-to-school, BPHC is reminding them of the ways they can stay safe and healthy and avoid missed days of schools amid the rising spread of COVID-19, and likely spread of the flu and RSV in the fall and winter.

Most importantly, BPHC strongly recommends that all families stay up to date with their vaccines for COVID-19, flu, and other diseases, such as pertussis, measles, and varicella. We recommend that everyone ages 6-months and older get their annual flu shot in September or October. Families should plan ahead and schedule flu shot appointments with their trusted health care providers or at a local pharmacy.

The FDA and CDC are expected to issue approvals for updated COVID-19 vaccines and schedules in the coming weeks. BPHC will provide recommendations after reviewing the latest guidance. In the meantime, everybody should take the following steps to protect themselves and their loved ones from getting sick with COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses by:

- Having COVID-19 rapid testing kits available at home to test if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

- Staying home when sick and wearing a mask if you are around others while ill or in public

- Talking to your trusted healthcare provider about treatment if you test positive for COVID-19 or flu and are at high risk for severe disease.

- Wearing a well-fitting face mask, especially in crowded indoor settings if you are at high risk of severe illness (e.g., unvaccinated or moderately to severely immunocompromised)

- Washing your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- Regularly disinfecting and cleaning high touch surfaces.

COVID-19 vaccines and testing are still available throughout the city. BPHC operates two standing clinics at the Bruce C. Bolling Building in Roxbury and City Hall that offer free COVID-19 vaccines, boosters, and rapid at-home testing kits which can be taken on site. BPHC has also partnered with several community-based organizations to create rapid at-home testing kit distribution hubs in neighborhoods across Boston. More information about distributions hubs is available on the BPHC website.



**DURKAN** (from pg. 1)

the West End. The Mayor noted that she saw constituents from every neighborhood in District 8 as she looked around her at the ceremony.

Liz Vizza, president of the Friends of the Public Garden, led the crowd in reciting The Pledge of Allegiance, while Kenzie Bok, who preceded Durkan as District 8 city councilor and now serves as administrator of the Boston Housing Authority, read scripture and offered a prayer attributed to St. Francis for the occasion.

"It's such a weight off my shoulders that my successor, Sharon, cares about District 8 as much as I do. I'm so excited about her leadership on the council," Bok told this reporter.

Looking ahead to representing the people of District 8, Durkan said, "This moment is an important moment for this city. We're deciding if we will have a livable future and a sustainable climate, if we will be able to live here, and stay here. And whether our grandkids can imagine a future in Boston. That's why I put my name on the ballot, and that's why I'm here to serve you District 8."

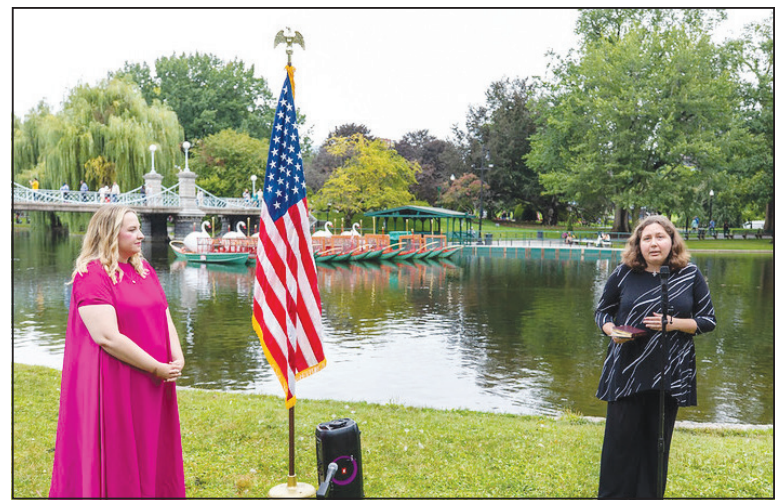
Durkan added, "These issues are really hard, they seem large and intractable. But when you look around this group of people, it feels like it's possible. Every person here has a history of caring for Boston, and they're who I'm taking with me."



Sharon Durkan (sixth from right) is seen with other elected officials and dignitaries upon her being sworn in as District 8 city councilor on Aug. 15 in the Public Garden.



Mayor Michelle Wu speaks as Sharon Durkan looks on.



Former District 8 City Councilor Kenzie Bok speaks as her successor, Sharon Durkan, looks on.

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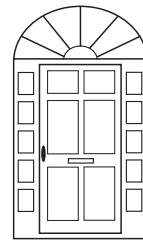
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FRESH & LOCAL

Cooking with restraint

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

There's been a flavorful bonus from the move to eat healthier, sustainable food. Changing from ultra-processed foods to simple whole foods, you learn to enjoy nature's unique flavors. This leads to a more restrained approach to making and presenting food. This time of year, we can make a lunch of sweetcorn and tomatoes with very little added to these summer superstars. A bit of olive oil or butter and a sprinkle of salt is all we need.

Real Food, Fewer Ingredients

To quote Jamie Oliver, "Real food doesn't have ingredients; real food is ingredients." Oliver has been one of the leaders in cooking with restraint. His cookbooks like, "5 Ingredients: Quick & Easy Food" and "5

Ingredients Mediterranean: Simple Incredible Food" celebrate using fewer ingredients in more straightforward ways and enjoying the full flavors of the best food you can find.

The "Five Ingredient Rule" has recently become a trendy food and diet theme. In some cases, creators of simplified recipes will allow a few basic additions like a fat, an acid, salt, and pepper. This rule is also a good guideline if you buy prepared foods. If the ingredient list is long and contains chemicals and additives, look for a better choice.

Some find that eating more 5-ingredient meals helps with weight control. It makes sense since we know that ultra-processed and junk foods are significant factors in the obesity epidemic.

Craveable Food!

We love reading menus where the chef has used few ingredients, and we can imagine how something will taste. A recent example is the crab toast at Little Whale on Newbury Street in Boston. It's avocado toast with a

generous portion of crab, a sprinkle of Aleppo pepper, and fresh dill. Penny confirmed that it did not have an unwelcome dose of mayonnaise that many chefs add to many recipes. It didn't and has become a dish we crave and enjoy often.

Fewer ingredients mean you have less chance of including something your diners can't have or don't like. Buying fewer, high-quality ingredients means less food waste. When you pay

(FRESH AND LOCAL Pg. 9)



This crab toast is a perfect example of using the best you can buy and knowing when to stop adding ingredients to a dish.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING (from pg. 6)

residents of affordable housing in Boston should be the first to experience the transformative benefits of the Green New Deal," said Green New Deal Direc-

tor Oliver Sellers-Garcia. "This means providing them with cleaner and more comfortable buildings year-round. Our commitment to this program show-

cases our strategic utilization of ARPA funding to make targeted investments that enhance quality of life and promote equity. As we move forward, we will persist in our efforts to secure Federal climate funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, leveraging our early successes with ARPA funds. Together, we will continue to build a sustainable future that leaves no one behind."

The City anticipates that the comprehensive energy assessments can be scoped, completed, and with funds disbursed within 3-6 months of the grant award. After a thorough evaluation process, including eligibility confirmation under ARPA guidelines and suitability assessment, MOH received a total of 20 applications representing 56 buildings and 2,078 units across the city. After review, the Office of Housing will be awarding grants to all 20 applicants. The exact amount of funds to be disbursed will be determined based on the approved scopes of work. The Office of Housing will continue to accept applications on a rolling basis. To apply, please visit this link.

"With the Mayor's Office of Housing's support, 2Life Communities can begin to compre-

hensively plan for the future of Leventhal House, a 254-apartment building that has served hundreds of residents for more than 50 years," said Lizbeth Heyer, 2Life Communities' Vice President and Acting CEO. "These funds will allow our organization to explore greater energy efficiency and resiliency, a reduced environmental impact, and, most importantly, enhanced comfort for our residents at Leventhal House for years to come."

It is important to note that while not all the buildings represented are 100% affordable, MOH's grant funds will be proportionally allocated to each comprehensive energy assessment based on the number of eligible affordable units (affordable to households at or below 100% of the Area Median Income).

The City is embedding the Green New Deal throughout City initiatives, making healthier and cleaner communities for all of our residents. In July, Mayor Wu signed an Executive Order (EO) Eliminating the Use of Fossil Fuels in New Construction and Major Renovations of City Buildings. While the EO exempts projects already in procurement, design, or construction, it requires all new municipal buildings and major renovations to

operate without fossil fuel usage.

Additionally, previously in March, Mayor Wu launched the Large Building Green Energy Retrofits Program—an initiative under the Mayor's Office of Housing supported by \$10 million in ARPA funding. Today's announcement is an update to this programming, granting \$10,000 for technical assistance grants that help building owners plan toward achieving BERDO compliance and deep energy retrofits of their buildings. The City intends to provide additional funding when the assessments are complete. These green energy retrofitting measures include installation of energy-efficient lighting and appliances, installation of solar panels, and more. The City announced its intention to expand on these initiatives with a retrofit program for smaller residential buildings and a program specific to retrofitting the Boston Housing Authority. These programs that will mitigate carbon emissions from the building sector and improve housing affordability reinforce the Mayor's commitment to a Green New Deal approach to working toward environmental and economic justice in Boston.

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# BWSC announces free lead-pipe replacement for Boston property owners

Special to the Sun

Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) announced that it now offers private lead service lines replacement at no cost to property owners, a move that is expected to accelerate BWSC's intensive efforts to make Boston lead pipe free. Funding from the Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will defray the costs of the initiative and enable Boston to replace remaining private lead service lines for free.

"Some ratepayers had rightly been concerned about their share of lead replacement costs, but all financial barriers have now been eliminated," stated BWSC Executive Director Henry F. Vitale. "Property owners with lead service lines should call BWSC and schedule to have these lines removed and replaced."

With its existing Lead Service Replacement Incentive program, BWSC has long been a national leader in private lead service line replacement and has removed thousands over the last three decades. Most recently, BWSC offered private property owners grants up to \$4,000 for lead service pipe removal, an amount that often covers the entire job or leaves a balance that can be repaid interest free. For various reasons some owners were left with larger remaining costs to remove their lead service pipes, especial-

ly those whose properties are set back from the street, a situation that increases lead pipe replacement costs. Now, Boston property owners who would like to take advantage of this no-cost program are urged to call the BWSC Lead Hotline for assistance at (617) 989-7888. Customers may also visit the Commission's Lead Service Map at: <https://www.bwsc.org/environment-education/maproom/lead-service-map> to look up information the Commission may have on the status of their property.

At the source of supply, Boston's drinking water, which is provided by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs. Neither MWRA's nor BWSC's water distribution mains contain lead. Lead can enter the drinking water when water remains standing in a lead service line for long periods of time. Also, lead solder used in plumbing, and older brass fixtures can contribute to lead in drinking water.

Replacement of private lead service lines is an important public health issue because excessive amounts of lead in the body can cause serious adverse health effects.

For more information about lead in drinking water and to find out how to participate in the new No Cost Lead Replacement Incentive Program, Boston residents may contact the Commission at the Lead Hotline (617) 989-7888.

## FRESH AND LOCAL (from pg. 8)

a premium for the best, you tend to buy exactly as much as you need and use it immediately.

### Seasonality

Another way to show restraint in cooking is to take advantage of seasonal foods. When you shop at a farmers market and take home fresh foods from the field, pasture, or ocean, they have more flavor and nutrition. Limiting what you add to the dish can let the fresh taste shine.

In spring, we often have a big plate of asparagus roasted with olive oil, salt, pepper, and a squeeze of lemon. In the fall, we roast sheet pans of root vegetables and squash with the same preparation. These become the center of our plates, with a few slices of leftover turkey or a piece

of fish on the side.

When we buy fish at the market, we cook it simply. Scallops sautéed in butter with seasoning and lemon are a perfect plate of food. Penny will top a piece of salmon with ginger, scallion, soy sauce, and sesame oil and roast it in foil packets for a restaurant-quality dinner.

There are instances when a cook has the time and wants to spend an afternoon creating a complex curry or multi-sauced lasagna. However, for everyday meals that are healthy and delicious, we recommend editing the ingredients and letting natural flavors step into the spotlight.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Send an email to [Penny@BostonZest.com](mailto:Penny@BostonZest.com) with your suggestion.



## MOR-EV

### Massachusetts Offers Rebates for Electric Vehicles

## Healey-Driscoll administration announces equitable expansion of electric-vehicle rebate program

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has announced substantial changes to the Massachusetts Offers Rebates for Electric Vehicles Program (MOR-EV Program), which provides rebates for the purchase or lease of light-, medium-, and heavy-duty battery electric and fuel cell electric vehicles (EVs). These changes aim to support greater adoption of EVs in Massachusetts, including new rebate programs for income-qualifying Massachusetts residents.

"This significant expansion of the MOR-EV Program will make electric vehicles more affordable and accessible for residents of all income levels," said Governor Maura Healey. "Residents will now be able to get their rebates the day they buy their car, instead of waiting for the funds to come in. And income-eligible folks will now be able to get additional rebates, including for used vehicles. This is a great development in our efforts toward an equitable clean energy transition."

"Our administration is committed to reducing transportation emissions, and these important changes to MOR-EV will help provide cleaner air in our communities," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "Far more residents will now be eligible for rebates, and we look forward to seeing the number of electric vehicles on the road across Massachusetts grow exponentially in the coming years."

In addition to the existing \$3,500 rebates for EVs, the new MOR-EV program elements include:

- The launch of rebates at the point-of-sale with participating dealers;
- \$3500 rebate for used EVs for income-qualifying residents;
- \$1,500 rebate adder for income-qualifying residents

called MOR-EV+ that is in addition to the standard rebate for new or used electric vehicles; and

- Increased rebates for certain light-duty pickup trucks.

The MOR-EV+ and MOR-EV Used rebates are retroactive to November 10, 2022 for any income-qualifying residents who purchased new or used EVs on or after that date.

"Reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector is critical to meeting our climate goals, and we are excited that our expanded MOR-EV program will provide greater access to electric vehicles for more Massachusetts drivers," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "MOR-EV is forward-looking and brings Massachusetts one step closer to phasing out expensive, volatile fossil fuels and transportation pollution that disproportionately impacts environmental justice communities."

"In Massachusetts, transportation accounts for 42% of our emissions, and we know that environmental justice communities often bear the brunt of pollution while challenged to participate in clean energy and transportation programs," said Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony. "The updated MOR-EV more equitably serves a greater number of residents to offset the cost of buying an electric vehicle."

Additional details about the rebates are available at <https://mor-ev.org>.

### Culturally Competent Outreach

Through the MOR-EV program administrator, the Center for Sustainable Energy, the Commonwealth has initiated a culturally competent outreach program

to more effectively reach Environmental Justice communities, income-qualifying residents, and limited English proficiency residents with targeted information about available electric vehicle rebates. The MOR-EV website includes translation capabilities, with the option to translate into Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese and Chinese.

### Background on MOR-EV

Launched in 2014, the Massachusetts Offers Rebates for Electric Vehicles (MOR-EV) program is an education and rebate program funded by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and administered by the Center for Sustainable Energy. The program aims to increase the number of zero emissions vehicles on roadways and reduce Massachusetts transportation sector greenhouse gas emissions. As of July 1, 2023, MOR-EV rebates are for battery electric and fuel cell electric vehicles only.

Since June 2014, the MOR-EV Program has issued nearly \$72 million in rebates for passenger vehicles, incentivizing the purchase of more than 32,000 electric vehicles as of the end of June 2023.

For additional information regarding MOR-EV, including current program eligibility details, please visit the program's website. Additional details regarding rebates for electric vehicles greater than 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) can be found by visiting the MOR-EV Medium- and Heavy-Duty Program website.

Funding for the MOR-EV Program is available from the Electric Vehicle Adoption Incentive Trust Fund and through proceeds from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

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# MBTA to release RFQ for 3-5 Year \$120 Million renewable energy contract

Special to the Sun

The MBTA Board of Directors has approved the release of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for an up-to-\$120 million wholesale renewable electricity supply contract, upgrading the T's commitment to renewable energy and continuing its leadership in clean transportation. The MBTA is also further supporting the Commonwealth's climate change goals and meeting Clean Energy Standard requirements by recommending that 30% of its power be supplied by Massachusetts solar and wind Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs).

"This critical procurement in fully renewable energy, further highlighted by our recommendation to purchase 30% Massachusetts Renewable Energy Credits, underscores the T's commitment to electricity produced from renewable energy sources while being fiscally responsible, understanding our energy needs will continue to grow in the future," said MBTA General Manager

and CEO Phillip Eng. "We're looking forward to receiving responses to this RFQ, and I thank the dedicated members of our Sustainability and Finance teams for working so diligently to build out this procurement."

"I applaud the MBTA's commitment to renewable energy and its efforts to make clean transportation a reality," said Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Rebecca Tepper. "This procurement is an important part of our whole-of-government approach to combatting the climate crisis. I'm grateful for the collaboration we have across agencies to achieve our ambitious climate goals and deliver clean transportation to the people of Massachusetts."

To meet the transportation needs of the region, the MBTA uses many forms of energy and seeks to reduce our carbon footprint and our impact on the environment whenever possible.

Currently, the MBTA is the second largest transportation

entity and the fourth largest U.S. government entity powered by renewable energy as well as the 50th largest purchaser of renewable energy overall in the country. As a leader in clean transportation initiatives, this energy procurement upgrades the T's commitment to renewables since its last energy contract in 2021.

The MBTA currently uses approximately 360,000 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity annually, making the T the largest electricity consumer in the Commonwealth. The MBTA procures its electricity supply in advance at a fixed price because it makes smart fiscal sense, providing the T with budget stability and predictability in an energy market that can frequently fluctuate. Alongside much of the Commonwealth and the country as more services convert away from carbon-emitting avenues, the T's electricity usage is also projected to increase as the MBTA transitions to battery-electric buses, electrified commuter rail vehicles, and more.

As the Commonwealth's largest electricity consumer, the MBTA is committed to utilizing 100% renewable energy sources. The MBTA's proposed electricity procurement includes both the purchase of fixed-price electricity and provisions for the purchase of RECs. RECs certify that electricity has been purchased from a renewable power source, such as wind or solar, with each certificate equivalent to the generation of 1 MWh of electricity.

The winning bid in response to the upcoming RFQ will be in place beginning January 1, 2024, for a three-to-five-year period. Responses to the RFQ may include fixed-price electricity blocks, RECs only, or a combination of the two.

The MBTA's recommendations for the upcoming 2023 procurement include a mix of renewable energy sources – 70% hydropower from Maine Class II RECs and 30% solar and wind from Massachusetts Class I RECs. The purchase of these Massachusetts Class I RECs

would help the T support the Commonwealth's climate change goals and meet Clean Energy Standard requirements. The T's previous 2021 energy contracts were a major achievement in offsetting its carbon footprint though these contracts provided 100% renewable energy sources through hydropower from Maine Class II RECs only.

In order for the purchase of power contract to be in place by December 31, the MBTA will issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on August 4 with responses due August 21. The official purchase will take place on September 13 with a transaction agreement finalized and signed with the winning bidder on September 13.

For more information, please visit [mbta.com/sustainability](https://mbta.com/sustainability), or connect with the T on Twitter @MBTA and @MBTA\_CR, Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, or TikTok @thembta.

# Public access advocates testify in support of guaranteed hybrid open meetings

Special to the Sun

At a public hearing by the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight, municipal leaders, disability advocates, and open government organizations are testifying in support of legislation that will guarantee greater access to open meetings by allowing members of the public to attend and participate in meetings in person or remotely.

An Act to Modernize Participation in Public Meetings (H.3040/S.2024), sponsored by Representative Denise Garlick

and Senator Jason Lewis, seeks to update the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law to guarantee hybrid meetings. As opposed to meetings conducted exclusively in person or exclusively online, hybrid meetings maximize civic engagement by allowing participants to choose the format that works best for them.

"I've been driving a motorized wheelchair since I was two years old, and it was during the pandemic that I attended my first legislative hearing – remotely," said Dianna Hu, chairperson of the Boston Center for Independent Living. "Hybrid meetings

are the latest instance of universal design, enabling residents across the state to engage with our government in a new and empowering way. We must bring this curb cut 2.0 into its rightful place of permanence."

"Hybrid access has become an essential part of public life," said Geoff Foster, executive director of Common Cause Massachusetts. "Having the option to attend meetings virtually has given many of our neighbors – particularly those with disabilities, caregiving responsibilities, or limited transportation – the ability to more easily participate in our democracy. We need to safeguard and expand this option for all members of our Commonwealth."

"Our 44 local Leagues of Women Voters across the state are deeply involved in the governments in their towns and cities. The League strongly supports this bill to assure that all residents can readily access and participate in the local government meetings that make so many major decisions about their lives," said Pattye Comfort, executive director, League of Women Voters of Massachusetts.

"Government participation and transparency is the cornerstone to a strong democracy," said Deirdre Cummings, MASSPIRG's legislative director. "This bill provides for both, making government meetings more accessible and transparent."

"Hybrid meetings are the only way to maximize public access to government deliberations. We can no longer accept the exclusion of large segments of the population from the democratic process simply because inclusion has a price tag or because change is inconvenient," said Gavi Wolfe, legislative director of the ACLU of Massachusetts. "We can do better, and we know how. In fact, nearly half of all Massachusetts city councils and select boards are already conducting hybrid meetings. The legislature should update the Open Meeting Law to guarantee hybrid meetings across the Commonwealth moving forward."

"A guiding principle of the disability justice movement is 'Nothing About Us Without Us,'" explained Barbara L'Italien, executive director of the Disability Law Center. "By focusing on inclusion and equity, and

welcoming the participation of 11.5% of the population, our communities and our democracy will only become stronger."

This legislation will provide municipalities the time and money needed to establish hybrid open meetings by:

- Creating a Municipal Hybrid Meeting Trust Fund and a grant program to help municipalities finance their modernization efforts.
- Prioritizing adoption by state agencies and elected municipal bodies.
- Allowing economic hardship waivers for non-elected municipal bodies.
- Giving more than five years – until 2030 – to phase in universal compliance.

The bill is backed by the ACLU of Massachusetts, Boston Center for Independent Living, Common Cause Massachusetts, Disability Law Center, League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association, MASSPIRG, New England First Amendment Coalition, and New England Newspaper & Press Association.

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## Real Estate Transfers

### BUYER 1 BACK BAY

Jane McGinn Burke RET  
Carucci, John  
Mahoney Jr, Brian B  
Hebert, Eric  
115 Comm Avenue Rt  
Sososhana LLC  
Kavanagh, Christina  
Tucker2278 Rt  
Tsirozidou, Irene  
Kruidenier, Laurens  
Octagon Nt  
Alcs Properties LLC  
Deane, Christina N  
D Gold & Wei Meng RET

### SELLER 1

Haseotes, George P  
Colleen M Bain RET  
Corbet 3rd, John W  
Brian F Sager 2013 RET  
Greene Jr, Bernard E  
Brewster, Isabel  
Hanlon, Mark  
Chu, Anne  
Johnson, Jay B  
Lepard, Joel  
389 Comm Avenue T  
Harley C Raumin T  
Hadar, Benjamin  
Tmm Rt

### ADDRESS

220 Boylston St #1220  
300 Boylston St #710  
75 Clarendon St #505  
41 Commonwealth Ave #8  
115 Commonwealth Ave #1  
25 Dartmouth St #3  
199 Marlborough St #701  
227 Marlborough St #8  
282 Newbury St #14  
319 Commonwealth Ave #40  
389 Commonwealth Ave  
464 Commonwealth Ave #53  
407 Marlborough St #3B  
416 Marlborough St #304

### PRICE

\$8,800,000  
\$1,100,000  
\$1,500,000  
\$775,000  
\$53,360  
\$845,000  
\$1,700,000  
\$363,375  
\$885,000  
\$1,950,000  
\$4,400,000  
\$740,000  
\$907,000  
\$825,000

### BEACON HILL

Notarnicola, Robert  
Baird, William  
Chen, Elaine D  
Atanassopoulos, Milana  
Brand, Steven M

Gorewitz, David M  
Hickin, Matthew  
Wood, Ekaterina  
Bgc Nt  
Mosakowski, Rachel A

10 Bowdoin St #504  
73 Hancock St #2  
33 Irving St #6  
39-41 Mount Vernon St #2  
140 Mount Vernon St #5

\$1,280,000  
\$1,775,000  
\$545,000  
\$4,228,000  
\$2,350,000

### BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE

Xu, Tim  
Fok, Adeline L  
Kassels, Steven J  
Levine Boston LLC  
Virgen, Cesar A  
Sophisa RET  
Alber, Kathryn  
Kim, Ellen  
Paramarta, Adlina  
Cghrs LLC  
Angaian, Balu  
Hinz, Amy  
Metri, George R  
Wilson, David  
U4marlborough 370 Nt  
U4marlborough 370 Nt  
U4marlborough 370 Nt  
U4marlborough 370 Nt  
U4marlborough 370 Nt  
U4marlborough 370 Nt  
Morrison, Jean  
Kashy, Daniel  
Athni, Sudhir  
Athni, Sudhir  
Ang-Lek Lt  
Park, Eun Y  
Field, Nicholas C  
Resor, Charles  
Leoutsakos, Nicholas  
Fitzgibbon, Sean P

Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
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Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Ckg Columbus LLC  
Lynn H Moore 2008 RET  
Eberhardt, Thomas J  
39 East Concord St LLC  
39 East Concord St LLC  
39 East Concord St LLC  
39 East Concord St LLC  
39 East Concord St LLC  
39 East Concord St LLC  
Quinn South End LLC  
Alexa Campolieto RET  
Ratimex LLC  
Ratimex LLC  
Queensberry Properties N  
Div Shawmut LLC  
Div Shawmut LLC  
Div Shawmut LLC  
Bilican, Bilada  
Holland, Jeffrey R

566 Columbus Ave #402  
566 Columbus Ave #406  
566 Columbus Ave #408  
566 Columbus Ave #409  
566 Columbus Ave #410  
566 Columbus Ave #411  
566 Columbus Ave #414  
566 Columbus Ave #504  
566 Columbus Ave #505  
566 Columbus Ave #506  
566 Columbus Ave #512  
566 Columbus Ave #513  
1 Dalton St #3002  
4 Durham St #4  
39 E Concord St #1  
39 E Concord St #2  
39 E Concord St #3  
39 E Concord St #4  
39 E Concord St #5  
39 E Concord St #6  
370 Harrison Ave #12C  
771 Harrison Ave #208  
107 Jersey St #10  
107 Jersey St #15  
60 Queensberry St #20  
100 Shawmut Ave #1008  
100 Shawmut Ave #204  
100 Shawmut Ave #903  
16 Symphony Rd #5  
156 W Brookline St

\$925,000  
\$925,000  
\$940,000  
\$1,525,000  
\$1,575,000  
\$2,125,000  
\$1,975,000  
\$1,625,000  
\$1,725,000  
\$2,425,000  
\$835,000  
\$1,975,000  
\$2,812,500  
\$935,000  
\$2,925,000  
\$2,925,000  
\$2,925,000  
\$2,925,000  
\$2,925,000  
\$2,925,000  
\$1,999,000  
\$855,000  
\$870,000  
\$870,000  
\$538,000  
\$754,900  
\$1,075,000  
\$2,232,000  
\$665,000  
\$5,800,000

## Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

### THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The window in the last clue is on 1 Cumberland Street, built in 1888. The Massachusetts Historical Commission lists the architects as A. S. Drisko and Warren D. Vinyl. However, listings from the time when it was built show Drisko as a carpenter and Vinyl as engaged in the real estate business.

You'll find the next clue in the Back Bay. Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to [Penny@BostonZest.com](mailto:Penny@BostonZest.com) with your suggestion.

### THIS WEEK'S CLUE





# THE RESIDENCES AT MANDARIN ORIENTAL

## 776 BOYLSTON STREET, RESIDENCE E10A

3 BEDROOMS | 2 FULL 1 HALF BATHROOMS | 4,091 SQUARE FEET

*LISTED AT \$12,990,000*



# THE CLARENDON

## 400 STUART STREET, PENTHOUSE 2

3 BEDROOMS | 3 FULL 1 HALF BATHROOMS | 3,545 SQUARE FEET

*LISTED AT \$9,950,000*



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