



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023

THE BOSTON SUN

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

SERVING BACK BAY - SOUTH END - FENWAY - KENMORE

Pedestrian crossings and safety signage to be installed at two footbridge entrances to the Esplanade

By Dan Murphy

New painted pedestrian crossings and safety signage will be installed overnight on Sunday, Nov. 5 at two footbridge entrances to the Esplanade that cross Back Street at Dartmouth and Fairfield streets, according to officials involved with the project.

Ali Badrigian, director of projects and planning for the Esplanade Association, detailed the crosswalk project, which the nonprofit organization is undertaking in partnership with the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation and the city's

Public Works team, during a virtual meeting held Oct. 24.

The first crossing would be installed where Back Street – a private way divided into numerous different parcels that runs parallel to Storrow Drive – meets Dartmouth Street, said Badrigian.

Although a pedestrian crossing is currently located here, it lacks a crosswalk, added Badrigian, while existing signage now found at the location doesn't provide approaching drivers with enough information to know that they're nearing a popular park entry. New safety

(SAFETY SIGNAGE Pg. 3)

MassDOT and project-team officials discuss Bowker Overpass replacement project

By Dan Murphy

The MassDOT (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) Highway Division held a virtual public hearing on Thursday, Oct. 26, to discuss the still-evolving design for the proposed replacement of a deteriorating southern section of the Bowker Overpass near Kenmore

Square.

The scope of the estimated \$90 million project, which would receive 80 percent of its funding from federal sources and the remaining 20 percent from the state, entails replacing the Bowker Overpass Bridge Superstructure over I-90, the MBTA's Worcester line commuter-rail

(BOWKER OVERPASS Pg. 4)



Edgerly Place was filled with neighbors celebrating the fun of Halloween on Oct. 28. See more photos on Pages 6 through 8.



The Gingras family came out to Bay Village Neighborhood Association's party Block-O-Ween style.

DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN PHOTOS

EDITORIAL

GET OUT AND VOTE ON TUESDAY

Many of us view local government in the same way that we think about the weather: Everybody complains about it, but nobody does anything about it.

However, unlike the weather, there actually is something we can do about the future direction of our local government: We can get out and vote.

We've always found it ironic that the turnout for national elections far exceeds the turnout for local elections. Local government has a much more direct impact on our daily lives than what happens in Washington. Our local government officials are responsible for just about everything that affects the quality of life in our communities, including our schools, public safety departments, trash collection, snow removal, street repair, etc., etc., etc.

Local governments are holding elections across the state this Tuesday, November 7. We urge all of our readers to take the time to get out and vote in order to elect the leaders in our community who best will reflect our values and goals for ourselves and our families.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS: TOTAL FAILURES

It is clear that the decision by the Democrats in the House of Representatives to allow a small band of narcissistic and anarchistic Republicans, led by the odious Matt Gaetz of Florida, to throw the Congress (as well as the country and the world) into chaos when they sided with Gaetz's small band of fellow GOP anarchists to remove former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy has completely backfired.

It is axiomatic in politics that you always should have a plan (with a desired end result) before embarking on a course of action. But with the unanimous election last week by the Republicans of little-known Louisiana Congressman Mike Johnson to the speakership after three weeks of dysfunction, it is obvious that House Majority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and his team had no plan or strategy of any kind.

Sure, they were able to gloat for a few weeks while the Republicans stumbled and fumbled, but in the final analysis, the Democrats ended up with the worst of all possible outcomes: The Republicans now are completely united and Congress has a Speaker (a position that is second in line to become president) who is so far right-wing, that he is somewhere out in the proverbial left field on just about every issue imaginable. In addition, Johnson was a staunch supporter of Donald Trump's efforts to undermine the election and has gone on record as opposing further military aid to Ukraine.

Sometimes -- SOMETIMES -- politicians have to put the good of the country above their party's perceived short-term political gain. Yes, Kevin McCarthy was a sniveling snake, but he did do the right thing in June to craft a compromise with Joe Biden to raise the debt ceiling and then again in September to pass a short term budget deal that averted a government shutdown.

Democrats complained that McCarthy could not be trusted and that he's a liar (all of which is true) -- but really? All politicians are less-than-truthful to some extent, from Joe Biden on down -- do they think the people don't know that?

In short, the Democrats "strategy" of just standing by and allowing McCarthy to fall has turned out to be a total disaster, with the immediate beneficiaries of their inaction and their miscalculations being Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin.

The Democrats forgot a cardinal rule of politics: The enemy of my enemy is my friend, as well as a cardinal rule of life: The devil you know is better than the devil you don't.

City Council supports dedicating road in Fenway to the late John Bookston

Special to Sun

The City Council adopted a resolution last week supporting the Boston Transportation Department's efforts to transform New Edgerly Road in the Fenway into a pedestrian plaza while earlier this week, the Council adopted a resolution in support of dedicating that same road in honor of the late Fenway neighborhood activist, John Bookston.

The City's Public Improvement Commission Policy for Name Changes and Square Dedication for Public Way and Private Way in the City of Boston states that a square dedication "can be

used to honor any person, living or deceased, who has had a great impact on the surrounding community," according to a press release from the city.

An active member of the Fenway neighborhood, Bookston, who died at age 76 on Oct. 8, was a strong advocate for our schools, affordable housing, and food justice. He served on the board of the Fenway Civic Association between 2016 and 2023, serving as a powerful voice for affordable housing and child-care in the neighborhood. His background as a lawyer demonstrated his commitment to social justice and uplifting the voices of the vulnerable through his years

of work with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Additionally, as a math teacher, Bookston taught his students with compassion and an innovative approach to mathematics as problem solving, which served to uplift students' confidence and abilities,

"He participated in his community with an intense and earnest optimism that he demonstrated in countless volunteer efforts across a variety of initiatives, which at the very least brought a smile to those he helped and at the most created meaningful and significant positive change in his community," according to the city.

got pumpkins?

Compost them in the Common on Nov. 6

Special to the Times

Boston does Halloween right. We decorate our stoops with pumpkins and a skeleton (or three); we dress up in costumes, kids and grown-ups alike; the city closes our streets to traffic; and neighbors open doors to trick or treaters. This makes for a wonderful night of community and revelry preparing us for the long winter ahead.

But once this night is over, we are left with lots and lots of pumpkins. In the US, we dispose of nearly 1.3 billion pounds of pumpkins each year after Halloween. And when these pumpkins are thrown in landfills or incinerated, they get truly spooky by warming our planet.

This year, don't throw your

pumpkins (or gourds!) in the trash, bring them to the Boston Common and turn them into compost instead. The Mothers Out Front Downtown Boston team, with permission from the city, has arranged for Black Earth Composting to bring a truck into Boston Common to

take our pumpkins away and turn them into nutrient rich soil. On November 6, the Black Earth truck will be parked in the Common near the corner of Charles Street and Beacon Street and available to take your pumpkins from 2:30-5:00.

Why compost? Composting reduces greenhouse gas emissions. In Massachusetts, food waste accounts for more than 25% of our waste stream after recycling. Across the country, municipal solid waste landfills are the third-largest source of human-related methane emissions and ~40% of that methane is generated from food scraps.

Methane is a very powerful greenhouse gas--it absorbs ~84

(PUMPKINS Pg. 3)



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PUMPKINS (from pg. 2)

times more heat than carbon over a 20-year time frame and is responsible for 30% of the planet warming we've seen so far. The good news is that methane is a short acting gas—after about 11 years, it dissipates in the atmosphere. This means that reducing methane emissions now is the best lever we have to slow the pace of temperature rise, helping to avoid climate tipping points and enabling us to reach the goals of the Paris Climate Accord.

Composting also creates rich soil—soil with increased microbial activity that suppresses plant disease and with better soil “structure” which improves water retention preventing floods, drought, and erosion, and reducing the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Compost creates healthy

soil with rich organic matter that not only supports plant health and growth, but also sequesters carbon deep in the earth where we need more of it to go. Compost is just wonderful stuff, and your pumpkins can help.

Composted pumpkins need to be as natural as possible—paint, stickers, and other added doodads cannot be composted, so please clean them as well as you can before composting. Wax is also a problem so using battery operated lights is preferred over candles or you can clean out any wax before composting. Basically, make the pumpkin scary, but keep it natural.

The Mothers Out Front Downtown team will be on hand at the truck on November 6 to help out and answer any ques-

tions you may have about composting.

If you find yourself inspired to start composting the rest of your food scraps, Boston is planning to expand its composting trial again this fall. You can sign up at www.bostoncomposts.com. Contrary to some bad information out there, composting will help our rat problem by keeping food scraps off the streets.

We look forward to seeing you and your pumpkins on November 6 between 2:30 and 5:00 on the Boston Common. The truck will be there rain or shine. If you would like to learn more about the Mothers Out Front Downtown team and join with your neighbors to help the climate, you can email us at info.ma.downtown.boston@mother-southfront.org

SAFETY SIGNAGE (from pg. 1)

signage comprising a ‘Yield’ sign for pedestrians and a ‘Stop’ sign for drivers will be installed facing both sides of Back Street at this location, she said.

(The Esplanade has 10 entry points, eight of which can be accessed via footbridges that cross Storrow Drive, said Badrigian, while three of these footbridges are located on Back Street.)

The second crossing, located where Back Street meets Fairfield Street, would have a “similar layout,” said Badrigian, but unlike the Dartmouth Street crossing, a crosswalk was once painted at this intersection, allowing the project team “to reintroduce some of that safety guidance for folks.”

At the Fairfield Street location, the project team also intends to replace existing safety signage, which has been defaced with graffiti and stickers, with new



The existing condition at the footbridge entrance to the Esplanade at Back and Dartmouth streets.

signage (again comprising a ‘Yield’ sign for pedestrians and a ‘Stop’ sign for drivers facing in both directions).

Badrigian described both planned crossings as having standard pedestrian crossing markings atop painted “green swaths” reminiscent of bike lanes found around the city.

Winthrop-based Diamond

Asphalt Services Ltd. has been selected as the contractor for this project, said Badrigian, who added that only one side of Back Street will be closed at a time to allow residents to access private residential garages on the street. “Slight” traffic diversions are expected from the project, she said.

“We’re hopeful this is a quick project that we can see immediate results,” said Badrigian.

During public testimony, Martyn Roetter, chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay board of directors, as well as a Beacon Street resident, said Back Street now “suffers from problems,” including automobiles regularly driving down the street recklessly and at excessive rates of speed, which he hopes will be remedied as a result of this project.

“Overall, I’m very impressed with what you’re doing,” said Roetter. “I think it will help enormously.”



D. MURPHY PHOTOS

The existing condition at the footbridge entrance to the Esplanade at Back and Fairfield streets.

NEWS IN BRIEF

SECOND VIRTUAL MEETING ON GRONK PLAYGROUND DESIGN SET FOR NOV. 2

The Department of Conservation and Recreation will hold its second public meeting on the design of Gronk Playground proposed for the Esplanade virtually on Thursday, Nov. 2, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

At this time, DCR will present the updated design for the Gronk Playground that is proposed for the former Charlesbank Playground area on the Charles River Greenway near the MA State Police Department, at the intersection of Storrow Drive and Monsignor O’Brien Highway. The goal is to create a new playground with a fitness theme that will include exciting new playground features with extensively incorporated universal access.

Visit https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJwuduqqpzIuH9BW-21D2ow_JIAV2NIFUaKOB#/registration to register for the meeting.

‘STORY TIME WITH LIBRARIAN MARGARET COMING TO USES

Story Time with Librarian Margaret will take place on Thursdays, Nov. 2, 9, 16, and 30; and Dec. 7, 14, 21, and 28 at 10:30 a.m. at United South End Settlements, located at 48 Rutland St.

The program, which is presented in partnership with USES, welcomes babies to preschoolers and their caregivers to join in for stories, songs, dance, art, and play time (with *arts and crafts to follow for ages 2 years old and up) and is designed to draw

children to love books, and to encourage interactive play with each other.

For more information, visit www.bpl.org.

FREE DANCE MOVEMENT CLASS SCHEDULED FOR NOV. 2

The South End Branch Library presents ‘Class Movement with Urbanity Dance’—a free dance movement class for all dance levels for ages 18 and up—on Thursday, Nov. 2, from 2 to 3 p.m. at 725 Harrison Ave., Suite 100.

For more information and registration, contact Christina Jones southend@bpl.org.

FENWAY OPEN STUDIOS SET FOR NOV. 4 AND 5

Fenway artists will be opening their studios on Saturday, Nov. 4, and Sunday, Nov. 5, at Fenway Open Studios at 30 Ipswich St.

SOWA ARTISTS GUILD TO HOLD NOVEMBER EVENTS

SoWa Artists Guild will hold its SoWa First Friday on Nov. 3 from 5 to 9 p.m., as well as its SoWa Sundays on Nov. 5, 12, and 19 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on Nov. 26 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

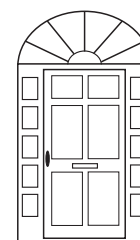
Also, SoWa Artists Guild will open on Black Friday, Nov. 24, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and on Small Business Saturday, Nov. 25, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

All events will be held at 450 Harrison Ave.

(NEWS BRIEFS Pg. 10)

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SCENES FROM FALL-O-WEEN ON BOSTON COMMON



PHOTOS BY JON SEAMANS

Mika Lin of Back Bay and her two-year-old Shiba Inu Aki enjoy the glow-in-the-dark swing set at the October 20 Fall-O-Ween family festival hosted by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. The event offered a free “monster mash” of activities including music, arts and crafts, treats, rides on a trackless train, field games, individual, group play facilitated by Knucklebones, LEGO® Discovery Center Boston hosted giveaways and fun Halloween-themed LEGO building activities.



Camden Spero, 3, and his mom, Jill, of Back Bay enjoy the attractions on Boston Common at the October 20 Fall-O-Ween family festival hosted by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Skating Club of Boston and sponsors College H.U.N.K.S. Hauling Junk & Moving, HP Hood LLC, and Xfinity.



Two-year-old Mac Briggs from the Theater District shows off his Bingo costume at the October 20 Fall-O-Ween celebration hosted by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department.

BOWKER OVERPASS (from pg. 1)

tracks, and Ipswich Street, while reconfiguring the ramps to and from Commonwealth Avenue; reconstructing the overpass and Boylston Street intersection; removing the existing, structurally deficient off-ramp on the east side of the structure to allow for the daylighting of a block-long segment along the Muddy River; and widening the bridge structure to the west to accommodate pathways along Charlesgate West, said Alwin Ramirez, one of MassDOT's project manager for this project.

The project, whose design is now at the 25-percent phase, is expected to go out to bid next summer, said Ramirez, with a contractor selected that winter. Construction is then slated to get underway in the summer of 2025, before wrapping up three and a half years later in 2028, he said.

Since the existing bridge currently lacks sufficient infrastructure to support multi-modal movement and is also inaccessible (i.e. non-ADA compliant), a replacement bridge would be built to connect Commonwealth Avenue to Boylston Street south of the Massachusetts Turnpike via a new four-way intersection. The new bridge will be built first adjacent to the Bowker Overpass to allow for traffic to be incrementally diverted to the new structure as demolition of the old structure moves forward, according to members of the project team.

Plans for the new bridge include a multi-use path over the Massachusetts Turnpike,

which would connect the Back Bay Fens to the Commonwealth Avenue Mall and also have a 16-foot landscaping strip that could accommodate plantings, said Dan Adams of the Somerville architectural firm, Landing Studio.

Rain gardens would also be installed below the overpass to divert the runoff of polluted stormwater from the structure into the Muddy River, Charlesgate Park, and the Back Bay Fens. The latest project design also includes plans for new crosswalks and lighting upgrades throughout the site.

Regarding anticipated impacts from the project, Scott Carpenter of Needham-based Gill Engineering said road closures are expected to take place during nighttime hours, although these details wouldn't be finalized until the next phase of the project.

Overnight closures would also be necessary “for some of the larger activities,” said Carpenter, while “a bigger footprint [will be] needed for some temporary short-term work.”

Carpenter acknowledged that construction would have some noise impact, but he said that “the bulk of that work will happen during the day,” including the removal of support beams from the overpass.

Asked what impact the project is expected have on local streets, Carpenter said, “Some vehicles will be diverted to different streets and different corridors. As far as specifics, I can't answer that.”

Carpenter added that the

impact on local streets would be studied during the traffic analysis in the next phase of the project.

Rep. Jay Livingstone said he is “very excited” about the project, while praising MassDOT for what he called a “greatly improved design,” especially given the currently proposed replacement, rather than the renovation, of the existing superstructure.

Additionally, Rep. Livingstone predicted that this project, along with several other major projects planned nearby, including MassDOT's plan to reconfigure the Storrow Drive eastbound bridge over the Bowker ramps and for the proposed redesign of Charlesgate Park, would result in a thorough transformation of the area.

“It's great to see the first part of the Charlesgate revitalization being realized,” he said.

Anthony Baez, the Back Bay and Fenway liaison for District 8 City Councilor Sharon Durkan, who also handles transportation matters for her office, said he was happy to see how the project has evolved to include the proposed superstructure replacement.

Margaret Pokorny, a member of the Charlesgate Alliance, as well as chair of the Friends of the Public Garden's Commonwealth Avenue Mall Committee, said she's “absolutely thrilled” to see how the project will open up one block of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall between Charlesgate East and West to pedestrians.

Pokorny also pointed out that the removal of the off-amp structure over the Muddy River would open up new land, which she said

she hopes could be made more “hospitable” with the addition of trees and bench, perhaps even being reimaged as a pocket park.

A self-described “tree person,” Pokorny also asked how enough new trees could be planted to completely offset the loss of mature trees from the project.

Dan Adams of the Landing Studio responded that the project team is aware of the mature trees located on site, and that they would be preserved whenever possible throughout the project.

Rich Giordano, director of policy and community planning for the Fenway CDC (Community Development Corporation), expressed concern with how the project would directly impact the planned redevelopment of the Our Lady's Guild House Convent at 20 Charlesgate West and asked for a separate meeting to discuss this matter.

The Fenway CDC and another nonprofit, the Planning Office of Urban Affairs, recently closed on the Fenway rooming house, said Giordano, adding that renovation on the property won't likely get underway for another couple of years, in which case the timing of this project would likely overlap with construction on Bowker Overpass project.

In a written comment, Marie Fukuda, co-chair of Fenway Civic Association's Parks and Open Space Committee, expressed her “extreme disappointment” with the pedestrian and bike conflicts at the south side of Boylston Street bridge. The south side of the bridge has been designated for the use of pedestrians, while bicyclists would also be routed

to the entry point of the Fenway Victory Gardens on the south side of the bridge.

This comes in direct conflict to a conversation that her group's representatives had with the Charlesgate Alliance in March 2023, said Fukuda, when members of the Fenway Civic had expressly requested that the north side of the Boylston Street bridge be designated as the crossing for bicycles.

Fukuda told this reporter she believes this apparent flaw in the plan arises from the fact that MassDOT only has jurisdiction over its project area and no control over other parks and roadways owned by Boston Parks and Recreation Department and the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation, respectively while designing use into both. The city has already created bike lanes on the West Fens, with an eye towards connecting them to its overall bike network, while DCR has a master plan that calls for bike lanes on its own carriage roads and parkways.

“This is a small change for a big project, yet one that makes a big difference for Fenway's parks and residents,” said Fukuda.

“Everyone has the same goals of connecting people and improving access for all, but it requires effort to make sure these pieces work well together.”

Built in 1964 and rehabilitated 20 years later in 1984, the Bowker Overpass – a four-lane, steel-beam viaduct with a suspended deck that connects Boylston Street to Storrow Drive and runs parallel to the Muddy River.

Paid for by Forward Boston Independent Expenditure PAC.

VOTE FOR ERIN MURPHY & BRIDGET NEE-WALSH FOR BOSTON CITY COUNCIL AT-LARGE ON NOVEMBER 7TH



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BVNA HOSTS BLOCK-O-WEEN HALLOWEEN BLOCK PARTY



Adopting a family space exploration theme were Crew the Astronaut, Bodhi (2nd from right) as Saturn and parents Jacob and Kristina Lindsey as alien explorers.



Archie Hammond has no fear of the spooky sights around him with his bagel in hand and his mom Ryan holding him.

Derek Kouyoumjian Photos

The Bay Village Neighborhood Association held its annual Block O Ween at Edgerly Place. Music, candy, costumes, fun activities and more awaited participants as the neighborhood celebrated Halloween in style.



Blake Hammond's faerie wings got an assist from her dad Matthew as she checked out the scene.



Boston City Council President Ed Flynn (2nd from left) and wife Kristen with Amy Phelps, Block O Ween coordinator Kim Kulasekaran, Jeff Goodstein, and Bay Village Neighborhood Association President Trish Gillis.



Clara Chen tries her hand in the Mystery Box while her friend Brooke Mendez has a laugh.

VOTE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7.

VOTE SHARON DURKAN FOR DISTRICT 8!

Our campaign is endorsed by...



BVNA HOSTS BLOCK-O-WEEN HALLOWEEN BLOCK PARTY



Hana Chwe and Fabio Depina.



Ingrid Harper shows off her mermaid costume.



Katie Phillips and Mike Murphy were a smooth looking couple enjoying the fun.



Kelly Deneen and Romie DeHillary as zombie Marie Antoinettes.



Chris, Izzy, and Gosia Walsh as Sanderson Sisters.



Grant Simpson and Michael Winston.



Leo, Chris, Charlie, and Lauren Toth.



Musicians from the Boston Music Project performed spooky Halloween standards like Monster Mash and One Eyed One Horned Flying Purple People Eater.



Rob and Jenny Lashway are "easy riding" Halloween fans.

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A photograph of three young girls in costumes. The girl on the left wears a blue princess dress and a tiara. The girl in the middle wears a white fairy costume with a long braid. The girl on the right wears a red soccer jersey and a headband, with the number '22' painted on her cheek. They are standing outdoors at night, with a person in a blue costume visible in the background.

A man with short brown hair, wearing a green t-shirt, is smiling and looking down at a baby. The baby is wearing a blue and white owl costume with large eyes and is holding a small yellow object in its mouth. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting at night.

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A woman with blonde hair and a young girl with orange braids are sitting at a white table. The woman is holding a small blue fabric square, and the girl is holding a small red fabric square. They are both smiling at the camera. The background is a brick wall.

Lindsey Santana named Deputy Director of the Office of Neighborhood Services

Mayor Michelle Wu announced Lindsey Santana as a new Deputy Director of the Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS). The Office of Neighborhood Services plays an integral role in connecting residents to City services and resources, facilitating resident input in all aspects of local government, ensuring the appropriate City departments respond to constituent service requests, attending neighborhood meetings, and responding to emergencies such as fires to help displaced residents.



Office of Neighborhood Services. Lindsey knows every corner of City Hall and leads with compassion and expertise,” said Mayor Michelle Wu. “Lydia has a prov-

Santana started her career in City Hall as a Community Project and Marketing Coordinator for the Office of Public Service, which is now known as the Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing. She later became the Jamaica Plain liaison in ONS and served in that role for two years. Santana has also served as Community Engagement Manager for the Environment Department and

(SANTANA Pg. 11)

City issues reminders ahead of municipal election

Special to the Sun

The Boston Election Department is reminding voters that the Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7. The election will determine At-Large and District City Councilors for the City of Boston. Due to redistricting, the district that residents live in may have changed. Residents can get information about which City Council district they live in and view a sample ballot.

In-person Early Voting

In-person Early Voting runs through Friday, November 3. City Hall is Boston's primary

early voting site, with voting from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday. Voters are encouraged to enter City Hall through the Hanover Street entrance to access the early voting location on the second floor.

Neighborhood early voting locations will be available throughout the city on from noon to 8 p.m. on Thursday, November 2.

All early voting sites are equipped with electronic poll books for voter check in. Voters are advised that state-issued identifications are optional for quicker "check in," but are not

required. Early voting locations are well staffed with poll workers and interpreters, and fully accessible to voters with disabilities.

Vote-by-Mail

Vote-by-mail ballots may be returned using one of 21 drop boxes located throughout the City; in-person at the Boston Election Department located at City Hall Room 241; at an early voting location during the prescribed hours for voting; or via U.S. Mail.

Voters are asked to return all signed ballot packages, whether using a drop box or the US Mail in the white postage paid return

envelope included with their vote by mail ballot. Ballots must reach the Boston Election Department or a ballot drop box by 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 7 to be counted. Ballots cannot be delivered to a polling location on Election Day.

Accessible Voting

The Accessible Electronic Voting System allows voters who are unable to independently read, write, hold, or physically manipulate or mark ballots to submit their ballot via a secure electronic delivery system.

Voting on Election Day

Polling locations open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. A list of polling locations can be found here. As a reminder, voters should check their registration status via the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website. Printed ballots will be available in English and Spanish. Chinese and Vietnamese ballots will be available where required. Language interpreters will also be available upon request. All voting locations are wheelchair accessible and are equipped with AutoMark Voter Assist Terminal for voters with visual or hearing impairments.

Mayor Wu announces Supplier Diversity Week

Mayor Michelle Wu joined City officials and local business owners to declare this week Supplier Diversity Week. She also announced progress toward reaching the City's supplier diversity goals along with several initiatives to foster a fair and competitive marketplace by bolstering the operational capabilities of Boston-based businesses historically excluded from competing for City contracts. Through additional investments in staffing and technology improvements, the City hopes to build on the progress made in Fiscal Year 2023 and further increase its discretionary spending with diverse firms towards its aspirational goal of 25 percent.

In an effort to further create transparency around supplier diversity and share the City's progress, the Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion (OEOI), Departments of Supplier Diversity (DSD), and Procurement Department will soon release a report on equity in City

contracting. The City of Boston awarded contracts valued at a total of \$151 million, or 14 percent, to certified MWBEs during the 2023 Fiscal Year, which represents a substantial increase from 6 percent in the 2022 Fiscal Year. The City awarded a total of \$1.08 billion in contracts that began in the 2023 Fiscal Year.

"This is about making more opportunities for all of our City residents, not just for the entrepreneurs and employees who will be directly impacted, but also the rest of the communities who will feel that ripple effect of when small, local businesses in Boston get to grow to their full potential," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "We know we have to stay together as one community, keeping all of us accountable when it comes to supplier diversity and pushing all of us to do more."

"Ensuring that a greater share of City contracts are awarded to local, small, diverse firms has been a top priority because

Mayor Wu and our team know that the development of some communities cannot coexist with the underdevelopment of others," said Chief of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Segun Idowu. "I am grateful for the hard work of the Supplier Diversity and Procurement teams who are both ensuring that existing local firms have an opportunity to work with the City, as well as building the pipeline of new companies that can seek similar work through our SCALE program."

"We know that our purchasing power is just that – power that we can use to build generational wealth in our neighborhoods and support small, local, and diverse businesses," said Chief Financial Officer and Chief Procurement Officer Ashley Groffenberger. "Under the leadership of Mayor Wu and in deep partnership with Chief Idowu, I am proud of the work we have undertaken to expand our reach and impact in advancing the City's supplier

diversity goals."

"I went from having zero contracts in Boston to being awarded contracts worth nearly one million dollars in the course of a year," said Rose Staram, owner and founder of RoseMark Production, who received a contract through the Sheltered Market Program. "This highlights the transformative power of seizing opportunities for people of color and women, which the Mayor and her executive leadership team has made possible. The Mayor's Office has actively pursued the simple, but not easy task of leveling the playing field in the world of contracting. It is a testament to her ability to overcome obstacles, build connections, and prove our worth as women and people of color. We are forever grateful for this program."

As part of Supplier Diversity Week efforts, the City today

announced several new initiatives, including the Supplying Capital and Leveraging Education (SCALE) program to support small, local businesses with technical assistance, educational programming, consulting services, and grant funding using the Contracting Opportunity Fund and America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. These initiatives aim to build generational wealth and opportunity for local minority business enterprises (MBE's), women business enterprises (WBE's), veteran business enterprises, and LGBTQ+business enterprises.

S.C.A.L.E. Program

Mayor Wu announced the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Supplying Capital and Leveraging Education

(SUPPLIER DIVERSITY WEEK Pg. 10)

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City Officials and local business owners joined Mayor Michelle Wu for a photo during the conference.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Continued from Page 3

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

HARVEST FESTIVAL & AUCTION IN SUPPORT OF BOTH WLP AND NABB SET FOR NOV. 9

Women's Lunch Place and the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay will hold the Harvest Festival & Auction on Thursday, Nov. 9, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Women's Lunch Place dining room at 67 Newbury St.

Enjoy a delicious harvest of culinary selections, wine, and craft beers, and get some early holiday shopping done during the event's Silent Auction, which will feature sports tickets, restaurant gift cards, and more. The event will benefit both WLP and

NABB.

A highlight of the evening will be a boutique where shelter guests will sell items they have made during the many classes that WLP offers. Handmade jewelry, knit wear, decoupage shells and more will be displayed for purchase. The artist will receive all of the proceeds.

Single ticket prices for Harvest Festival are \$125, and sponsorships are also available.

Visit <https://womenslunchplace.org/nabb> for more information.

FENWAY CDC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR NOV. 9 AT FENWAY COMMUNITY CENTER

The Fenway CDC's Organizing Committee Meeting takes place on Thursday, Nov. 9, from

6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Fenway Community Center at 1282 Jersey St.

Come share your voice and participate in making positive changes in the neighborhood. No experience or knowledge is necessary! Come and explore housing policies and to learn how to effectively organize and create meaningful impact.

For more information, contact Leo at lruizsanchez@fenwaycdc.org.

NEW BOOK CLUB SET TO MEET NOV. 14 AND DEC. 12 AT FOMU

The Scoop: Book Club -the South End Branch of the Boston Public Library's new book club - will meet on Nov. 14 and Dec. 12 from 2 to 3 p.m. at FoMu Ice Cream at 655 Tremont St. (Purchases are encouraged but not required.)

November's book is "The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich, and December's book will be "Five Tuesdays in Winter" by Lily King. Pick up a copy of November's book every Thursday in October at United South End Settlements or for December's book, every Thursday morning in November at USES, or send an email to schedule a pickup appointment. The eBook is also available on Hoopla Digital (with no waitlist).

To register, email southend@bpl.org.

FREE MARKET SET FOR NOV. 14 AT FENWAY COMMUNITY CENTER

A Free Market, co-organized by Fenway CDC and Fenway Community Center, is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 14, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Fenway Community Center at 1282 Boylston St.

Looking to start some early holiday shopping? Come swing by the Free Market. Bring your unwanted items to help your neighbors, and yourself. Please no bedding or soiled textiles. Contact Sage Carbone at scarbone@fenwaycdc.org with any questions.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING ON PROPOSED BACK BAY FENS PATHWAYS DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS SET FOR NOV. 15

The City of Boston will hold a virtual community meeting on proposed design improvements to the Back Bay Fens Pathways on Wednesday, Nov. 15, at 6 p.m. (Join the meeting then at bit.ly/bbf-pathways.)

Visit the project page at Project page: Boston.gov/Fens-Pathways for more information.

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY WEEK (from pg. 9)

(SCALE) business accelerator program. The RFP will utilize \$2.4 million of the \$9 million in American Rescue Plan funding allocated for this program to support industry-specific technical assistance, educational programming, and consulting services. It is designed to connect small businesses, particularly disadvantaged firms who face challenges accessing financial capital, business resources, and essential knowledge, with the tools needed to compete for public, private, and institutional contracts.

The RFP seeks partners who will work collaboratively with the Department of Supplier Diversity to empower small businesses in specific industry sectors, ranging from snow removal to HVAC services. The priority industry sectors were chosen because they represent areas of high City spending. With the goal of supporting at least 18 small, Boston-based businesses in its first year, the SCALE program will provide business participants with the tools, training, and significant capital to address key capacity issues that prevent smaller businesses from competing for larger government and institutional contracts.

As part of Mayor Wu's pledge

to make Boston a Green New Deal City, the RFP also emphasizes the City's preference for proposals that can help participants adopt cost-effective solutions aligned with environmental sustainability goals by contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Interested firms are encouraged to carefully review the RFP and submit their proposals in accordance with the outlined guidelines. For more information and to access the RFP, visit here.

Contracting Opportunity Fund

Mayor Wu also announced that 51 local, minority- and women-owned businesses have received grants from the City of Boston's 2023 Contracting Opportunity Fund. The Contracting Opportunity Fund is an initiative that supports capacity building investments for Boston-based businesses.

This marks the fund's third consecutive year of grantmaking, demonstrating the City's ongoing commitment to facilitating small business participation in and competition for municipal contracts. Using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, the Department of Supplier Diversity

recently disbursed approximately \$750,000 in grants of up to \$15,000, focusing on six priority sectors that represent areas of high municipal spending.

Of the 51 businesses chosen to receive grant funding this year, 31 percent are women-owned and 78 percent are minority-owned, with Black-owned businesses comprising over half of recipients. Over half of recipients are also small businesses and a combined 45 percent of grant recipients' businesses are located in the neighborhoods of Dorchester and Roxbury.

"I have a couple of painting jobs coming up, and I had to use all of my savings to secure the contract. Essentially, I am still in business because of the Boston Contracting Opportunity Fund Grant," said Bryant Williams, the owner of BWilliams Painting Company. "I will be able to pay for some insurance, part of my business mortgage, and equipment. There is no way I would have recovered from my deficit if not for this grant, which kept me afloat and allowed me to fulfill my contract with Northern Contracting, a partner I've been contracting with for years. This is truly a blessing."

The Boston Contracting

Opportunity Fund grant was first announced in the spring of 2021, designed through extensive dialogues and community conversations with small, diverse business owners to address barriers in public contracting identified in the City's 2020 Disparity Study. The study confirmed that businesses owned by women and people of color are widely available to perform City contracts, but are substantially underrepresented in the City's spending on construction, professional services, and goods.

The selection process was rigorous, involving a thorough review of applications by the Department of Supplier Diversity and external partners, including the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA), Amplify LatinX, and the Local Enterprise Assistance Fund (LEAF). Businesses were evaluated based on their ability to meet specific eligibility criteria and their proposed uses of the capacity-building fund. Funds may be used to invest in capacity-building activities such as the purchasing of new equipment, expanding rental space, and acquiring bonding or insurance, among other uses.

Supplier Diversity Compact

At today's press conference, Mayor Wu and local small business support organizations signed "A Compact to Build Local Economic Growth." Through this compact, the City and its partners commit to implementing the following principles of supplier diversity and small business growth: awareness of resources, certification to strengthen the pipeline of qualified businesses ready to work with the City, engagement with firms and local stakeholders, policy development to codify successful practices, and transparency.

As part of Supplier Diversity Week, the City is hosting a series of in-person and virtual workshops for small business owners. More information can be found here.

The Department of Supplier Diversity (DSD) of the City of Boston is dedicated to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in City contracting. DSD certifies businesses owned by people of color, women, veterans, and small and local businesses, and manages programs to encourage their participation in public contracting and foster their growth.

Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1 BACK BAY	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
Monaco, Jay M	Grant, Laura	280 Beacon St #5	\$825,000
Aldridge, Ronald	Hale, Gwendolyn	160 Commonwealth Ave #709	\$1,308,000
Aydin, Ebru	Div Shawmut LLC	100 Shawmut Ave #1108	\$759,900
100 Shawmut Ave Unit 1301	Div Shawmut LLC	100 Shawmut Ave #1301	\$4,800,000
Hauser, Kimberly F	Ts Pied-A-Terre Hldg LLC	430 Stuart St #1514	\$1,950,000
Horth, Gregory J	25 Clark Street Assoc Lp	25 Clark St #3	\$585,000
Alexander M Milley Irt No	Mcaf Winthrop LLC	240 Devonshire St #3805	\$1,850,000
Birnbaum, Cynthia L	Birnbaum Seth N Est	449-463 Washington St #11A	\$455,714
BEACON HILL			
Ohlson, Cheryl	li RHaseotes 2nd, V S	21 Branch St	\$3,100,000
BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE			
Pembroke Svr Prop LLC	Pembroke Street 126 Rt	126 Pembroke St #2	\$3,500,000
Ereb One Seventy Charles	Rref li 170 Charles LLC	170 Charles St	\$57,000,000
Hammudeh, Tarek	Tjre Investments LLC	69 Church St #3	\$1,349,000
Columbus Mgt LLC	Ckg Columbus LLC	566 Columbus Ave #COMMC	\$785,000
40 Concord Square Dev LLC	Mercon LLC	40 Concord Sq	\$3,053,500
Mukdissi, Zaki	Saloum, Samar	265-275 Dartmouth St #2C	\$640,000
Kiruluta, Edward	Marquis, John	7 E Springfield St #5B	\$1,450,000
Conte, Samuel J	Pauling David F Est	84 Gainsborough St #5W	\$695,000
Dasgupta, Seema	Dumont, Bernard	8 Garrison St #603	\$450,000
Ray-Soni, Ananya	Mark R Pardes T	8 Garrison St #710	\$515,000
Boskey, Peter	Rosenberg, David	11-1/2 Greenwich Park #1	\$2,600,000
Dean P Stamos RET	Smith, Sandra T	313 Marlborough St #1	\$1,097,500
Mukdissi, Zaki	Saloum, Samar	142-144 Newbury St #2C	\$640,000
WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN			
Two Bw Boston LLC	Blewitt, Maria R	2-1/2 Battery Wharf #2308	\$2,350,000
Anastasio, Andrea	Peter & T Maccarrone Lt	357 Commercial St #419	\$459,000
Dennis A Staats Lt	Demakes, Timothy	20 Rows Wharf #302	\$1,300,000
Garland, Garry M	Dennis A Staats Lt	20 Rows Wharf #604	\$1,050,000
East Coast Loft LLC	Shi, Ying	717 Atlantic Ave #7D	\$780,000
Moses, James A	Donald P Kanak RET	1 Avery St #12A	\$1,085,000
RF Holdings Backbay LLC	Rogers, Thomas S	3 Avery St #304	\$810,000
Pedro, Rachel	Safer Ft	40-42 Beach St #7A	\$550,000
14 Qprt T	Mcaf Winthrop LLC	240 Devonshire St #5014	\$1,725,000
Pang, Shengdong	Mcaf Winthrop LLC	240 Devonshire St #5110	\$2,775,000
Lewis Joint RET	8h Harbor Towers I Rt	85 E India Row #8H	\$726,000
Sullivan, Michael G	Smith, Katherine L	18 Union Wharf #18	\$4,950,000
Ge, Zhiyun	Yin, Zoe	449-463 Washington St #4E	\$655,000
33 West LLC	Back To Shul LLC	33-35 West St	\$4,083,625
33 West LLC	Back To Shul LLC	39-41 West St	\$4,083,625

SANTANA (from pg. 8)

most recently served as the Chief of Staff for City Councilor Brian Worrell.

“Lindsey’s return to the Office of Neighborhood Services is a win for the team,” said Community Engagement Cabinet Chief Brianna Millor. “Her background as a former neighborhood liaison and her experience in local government makes her fit to be an effective leader to support our neighborhood liaisons

in delivering impactful constituent services.”

In her new role within the Office of Neighborhood Services, Santana will build on the Office’s work to provide essential services to constituents and work towards deepening the City’s relationship with local businesses, organizations, and residents. She currently resides in Brighton and is pursuing her Master’s in Public Relations at Boston Uni-

versity.

“I am excited to contribute my knowledge and expertise to make the Office of Neighborhood Services stronger than it has ever been,” said Office of Neighborhood Services Deputy Director Lindsey Santana. “As the deputy director, I will empower liaisons to continue to be motivated leaders that deliver excellent constituent services for our neighborhoods.”

Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The arched doorway in the last clue is on 33 Bay State Road, built in 1891 and designed by prolific architect Samuel Dudley Kelley. Kelly designed numbers 7 to 47 on this block, except number 11, which Francis Richmond Allen designed.

You’ll find the next clue 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





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